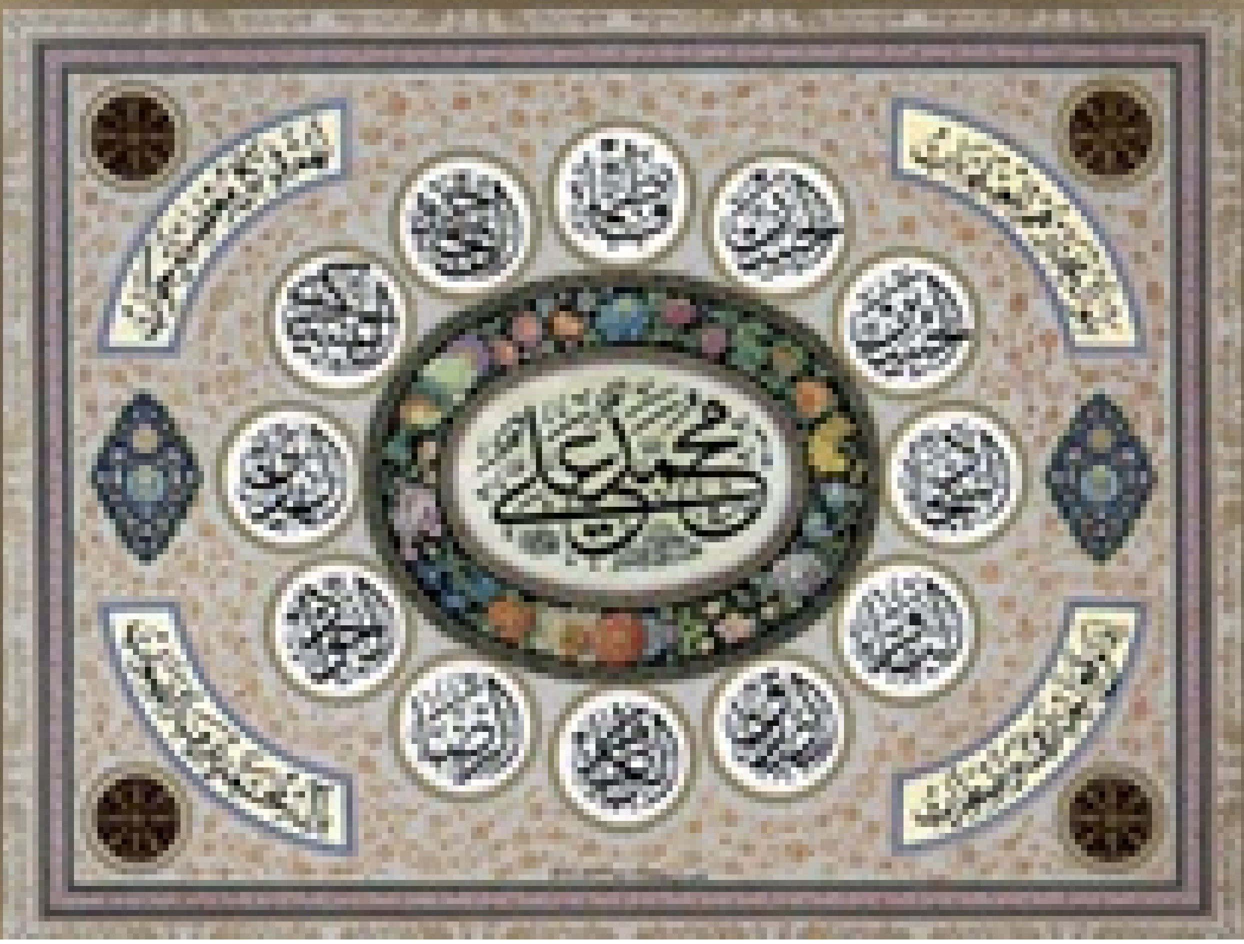
Anecdotes of The Ahlul Bayt

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point

This text is a compilation of incidents, narrations and teachings from the lives of the ۱۴ infallibles which help us in living our lives in total accordance with the laws of Islam. In this collection, Ayatullah Mutahhari only used reports that he found credible and which .came from reliable sources

Thanksgiving – A Prayer

In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful

He Makes Whom He Pleases Enter into His Mercy

(Surah Dahr; ۷۶:۳۱)

Thank You, Allah T'aala

Is all that I can say

For who knows whether we'll make it

With grit, come what may

And without Allah's Mercy

We may try all night and day

Forgetting what we're worth

A clot of blood, just clay

However, with His Mercy

A mountain can we move

With ease and no great effort

Just hope in Him, just love

So, Thank You Allah T'aala

Is all that I can say

Just help me share this blessing

With all who come my way

Bless Muhammad and his sacred Household

inconsequential me

Preface

Whenever a book arrives on the shelves, one wonders why it was written, what it .contains, and whether it will be worthwhile reading it. I'll make it easy for you

This book is a selected translation of the Urdu version of the Persian compilation, 'Daastaan e Raastaan' by Martyr Murtadha Mutahhari, who included only those incidents of the Ahl al Bayt (s) that he obtained from reliable sources, which he cited in the bibliography. For me, his

.name is enough for credibility

The generations of Muslims, whose first language is English, remain unaware of so many valuable truths available in the oriental languages. Their need initiated the translations of religious material, beginning with the Holy Quran, itself. Knowing how to read Arabic without understanding it, makes it worthless. The Book brought a Divine Message to ease man's life on this earth and make it a place worth living. Unfortunately, after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s) the Muslims reverted back to the customs and beliefs of the Age of Ignorance, with only lip service to Islam. Only the chosen ones, though, who Satan admitted he could not lead astray, remained .steadfast

As time passed, other people read the Quran, guided by the steadfast, and benefited from the wisdom it contained. They took precedence over the Muslims in practically applying it to their systems - political, social, economic, and judicial. They then moved from success to success and there was no looking back. Today, they rule the world .and their language is the language of power

The Muslims, on the other hand, moved from disgrace to disgrace and finally touched rock-bottom. Today, they reap only what they sow, because

.We profess Islam but do not practice it •

.We read the Quran but do not understand it •

.We are content with our ignorance and do nothing about it •

We follow the powerful; adopt their culture, customs and way of life; find ourselves • equally successful; find religion unnecessary, so, wish

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.to discard the already flimsy attachment

Like the powerful, we forget the one important truth about life. Life doesn't end in • the dust, for this universe was not created without purpose. The immense

organizational perfection of every one of the millions of systems existing in it suffices as proof of a destination. The powerful while powerful, forget that they must face that .destination

This book was written to share a vision of greatness, presented by those who did not transgress because they feared that destination, and despite trials and tribulations, opted for eternal life rather than eternal damnation. Their immortality is before you. Today, centuries later, they survive as symbols of nobility and perfection. Their power .to influence is greater than that of one living amidst us

The book contains some candid camera clips that need to be watched carefully, not casually. After each clip, a few minutes should be spent in asking yourself a few .questions

?Is there something new in it or something I already know •

?Is it practicable •

?Do I already practice it •

?Do I agree with it or disagree with it •

?If I agree, will I make it a part of my future conduct •

?If I disagree, is it because I am habituated to what it condemns •

?If I am a Muslim, must I possess these virtues •

?Do I profess love for these persons, yet cannot face them •

?Do I want to follow them •

?Do I want them to smile at me, or be filled with dismay •

Once

you've asked yourself these questions for the first few clips, they will become automatic guidelines for the rest, and you will yourself admit that reading the book .was worthwhile

I end with the prayer that all of us demonstrate through our actions, not only our .tongues, the Message we profess we possess

Ameen

Iffat Shah

١٨th Dhul Hijjah, ١۴٢٩

Washington, DC

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Nearness to Allah

(Recitation of the Holy Quran Desired by the Holy Prophet (s

Ibn e Masood was one of the scribes of the revealed Verses of the Holy Quran. He .wrote down a verse as soon as it was revealed

One day, the Holy Prophet (s) said to Ibn e Masood, 'Today I want to hear you recite '.verses from the Holy Quran

Ibn e Masood opened his manuscript and started reciting Surah An-Nisa. The Holy Prophet (s) listened, totally engrossed. When Ibn e Masood reached Verse ۴١, which ,read

How will it be, then, when We summon a witness from every group and summon you" as a witness over them?" The Holy Prophet (s), his eyes brimming with tears, said, 'Ibn '.e Masood, read no more, that will do

Two Practices

One day the Holy Prophet (s) entered the mosque and saw two groups of people busy

in two different activities. One group was praying and praising Almighty Allah, while the other was busy teaching and learning. He (s) smiled and commented, "Both groups are performing noble acts and will achieve perfection in what they commit themselves to with earnestness, and be blessed for it. However, I have been sent to teach people, guide them

on the path of truth and wisdom." Saying this, he (s) proceeded towards the group .that was busy learning and teaching and became actively involved in their work

Allah and His Prophets

It was after midnight. Umm Salama turned in bed to find the Holy Prophet (s) not there. She got up to find out and saw him (s) standing in a corner of the house weeping, with hands raised in prayer. She heard the following: 'O Creator of the universe! Please do not deprive me of the blessings that You have bestowed upon me. Lord! Protect me from the evil of my enemies and the envious. O, Master of the universe! Let not the vices that You have kept me away from contaminate me. O, '.Sovereign of both worlds! Be not annoyed with me for even a moment

Hearing his (s) prayer, Umm Salama started to shiver with fear for herself. She sat down and started weeping. Her sobs got out of control and the Holy Prophet (s) heard her. He (s) came to her and asked tenderly, 'Umm Salama, why are you sobbing so '?bitterly? What is the matter

Why should I not weep?' she cried. 'You enjoy a most eminent and honorable position' in the eyes of the Almighty. You are close to Him being His Chosen Messenger (s). Despite this, you fear and beg Him not to be annoyed with you even for a moment. '?Tell me, what should be the level of fear in commoners like me

The Holy Prophet (s) replied, 'Umm

Salama! How can I be complacent about the position He has chosen for me? Prophet Yunus was left on his own for a moment, and you know what dire problems he got ’.into

The Power of Truth

It was the ‘Year of Sorrow’ for the Holy Prophet (s). His uncle, Hazrat Abu Talib (‘a), who had protected and supported him like a wall of iron, passed away, followed by his (s) beloved wife Hazrat Khadijatul Kubra (‘a), his fortress of strength. In short, he lost his supporter within the four walls of the house, and his protector in the life outside the house. It was he who named the year as one of sorrow, because both, who had supported him as the Messenger of Allah(s), had been called back by their Creator. The events following their demise showed the world the significance of the role they .had played in the Divine mission of his life

The Quraysh, on the other hand, could not hide their pleasure and glee. Their only .desire was to create as many hurdles in the Holy Prophet’s (s) way as possible

A few days after facing this loss, the Holy Prophet (s) was passing through a street when somebody threw garbage on him. He had to return home to bathe and change his clothes. His daughter, Hazrat Fatima Zahra (‘a) saw him in that condition, and with tears flowing down her cheeks, started removing the dust from his head. He looked at her and said, ‘Don’t weep, my dear Fatima, and

don’t be anxious about my safety. Your father is not alone. The Creator of the ’.universe is with him

After this incident, the Holy Prophet (s) decided to go elsewhere to spread the Message. He left alone for Taif, to preach Islam to the Bani Saqeef. Taif was a holiday resort for the wealthy Meccans, because of its peaceful environment and cool, .pleasant climate

He was not expecting any great positive response from the people of Taif. They were,

like the rich polytheists in the suburbs of Mecca, living a life of luxury. However, this did not deter him. He was ready to undertake any amount of trouble for the sake of .Allah and His Message

He entered Taif, and as soon as the wealthy came to know that Muhammad (s) had come to speak to them, they refused pointblank, and humiliated him. They sent their handpicked rogues and scoundrels to force him out of Taif, so that the simple hearted would not fall a prey to his preaching. They hurled stones at him from all sides until he was bleeding from the wounds inflicted by them. He left the town and sat under a tree in an orchard in the outskirts of the town. This orchard belonged to Utba and Shayba, two rich traders of the tribe of Quraysh. By chance, they happened to be inspecting their fruit at that time and saw the Holy Prophet (s) in that injured condition. They .smiled at each other, pleased with the sight

The Holy Prophet (s) sat under the tree, and cleaned the blood from his face. He was ,alone with his Lord there. He wanted to share his feelings with Him, so he said

My Master, my Lord! I hereby lodge a complaint with You against these people.They" had no reason to treat me, your weak and helpless creature, as they did. Lord! You are the God of the poor and oppressed, You are my God, and You just saw me facing the cruelty and hatred of these hooligans alone. Have You decided to empower my enemies and defeat me? If that pleases You, Lord, then I am content. Nothing else is of consequence besides Your Pleasure. I take refuge in Your Light, which shattered the gloom of the universe and made it bright. Even if You allow disasters to descend on me, I will happily accept everything that comes from You, for my only desire is to gain Your Pleasure. You are the Omnipotent, the Sovereign over everything in the ".Universe

Utba and Shayba were watching the alienated condition of the Holy Prophet (s) with pleasure. They placed a bunch of grapes in a plate and ordered their Christian bondsman, Addas, to give it to the injured person sitting under the tree. They warned .him to return immediately, and not enter into a conversation with him

.(Addas took the plate of grapes and placed it before the Holy Prophet (s

.They are for you, eat them,' he said'

The Holy Prophet (s) picked

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'.a grape from the bunch and said, 'Bismillah

.Addas had never heard anybody in Taif utter the phrase he had just heard

.What did you just say? I don't recall hearing it before,' he queried'

'?O Addas, where are you from, and which religion do you profess'

'.I am a Christian from Nineveh'

Oh, so you are from Nineveh. Yunus ibn e Matti, the man of God, was your fellow' '.citizen

Strange! Indeed, most strange! I fail to understand how you know his full name. Not' even ten people knew his father's name when I lived there. I am amazed how you '.learnt about it

'.Yunus is my brother. He was a prophet of God and I, too, am a Prophet of God'

Shayba and Utba noticed that their bondsman was totally engrossed in conversation. They grew anxious. They did not want anyone to communicate with the Holy Prophet .(s), because whoever did, almost immediately embraced Islam

Their fears were not unfounded. They saw Addas suddenly fall on the ground and kiss .the Prophet's (s) hands and feet

They couldn't have been unhappier. Looking at one another, they said, 'Did you see '.that? He has misguided poor Addas

Hubba 'Arni and Nauf Bukali were lying in the courtyard of Dar ul Ammara at midnight, almost asleep. Suddenly, they saw Imam Ali ('a) coming towards the courtyard, but in a strange manner. He seemed to be on the verge of falling, and was supporting himself by placing both hands against the wall. He was reciting the last verses of Surah Aal e

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:Imran'

Undoubtedly, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of day and night, there are many signs for those who understand. Those, who remember Allah standing and sitting, while lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, and say, 'Our Lord! You have not created this in vain! Glory be .to You! Save us then from the chastisement of the fire

Our Lord! Surely, whomsoever You make enter the fire, him You have indeed brought to disgrace, and there shall be no helpers for the unjust. Our Lord! Surely, we have .heard a Prophet calling to the faith, saying; "Believe in your Lord!" So, we did believe

Our Lord! Forgive us therefore our faults, and cover our evil deeds and make us die with the righteous. Our Lord! Grant us what You have promised through Your apostles, and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection; surely, You do not fail to '.fulfill Your promise

Hubba couldn't believe his eyes and ears and was staring amazed at Imam Ali's ('a) condition. Nauf, on the other hand, was weeping uncontrollably. Imam Ali ('a) came '?near their beds and asked Hubba: 'Are you asleep or awake

'!Awake and shocked! Seeing your fear of Allah, we don't stand a chance'

O Hubba! We will all face Him one day, with no act of ours concealed from Him. He is' '.closer to us than our own jugular vein, with nothing between

,He then moved towards Nauf, and asked

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’?Are you sleeping‘

’.No, Maula, I’m awake, weeping‘

O Nauf, weeping today out of fear of Allah will brighten your eyes tomorrow on the‘ day of Judgment. Each tear will put out the fire of hell. No man enjoys a status greater than one who weeps due to fear of Allah and befriends for the sake of Allah. He who befriends Allah should befriend only for the sake of Allah and never value anything above it. He should be hostile only for the sake of Allah. This hostility will hold nothing but good for him. Whoever reaches this stage attains the heights of true faith. I have ”.done my duty and warned you. So, fear Allah

He then walked on, muttering softly: ‘My Lord! I wish I knew whether You turn away from me when I am negligent, or keep watching me? I wish I knew what You think of ’.me during the long hours of forgetful sleep and when I am lacking in thankfulness

By Allah! Ali (‘a) spent all night in this state, until the call for the dawn prayer was‘ .heard,’ said Hubba and Nauf

Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik

Maalik ibn e Anas, the famous scholar of Medina, once accompanied Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) on the Hajj. On reaching Meeqat, they all dismounted, donned the Ahram, offered the required prayer, and mounted their camels, raising the slogan of the ,Hajjis

Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik, laa Shareeka Laka Labbaik, Innal Hamda wan‘ ’,Ne’amata Laka wal Mulk, laa Shareeka Lak

(when they found the Imam (‘a

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in an exceptionally strange state. He was shivering and his voice choking with

emotion, unable to pronounce the obligatory slogan of Hajj. Maalik came to him and ’.said, ‘Ya ibn e Rasool Allah, try to repeat the words with us. You know it is obligatory

O Ibn e Abi Aamir! I am scared to utter these words. Do you know what they mean?‘ ,They mean to declare

”.My Lord, I am ready to present myself before You, and ready to submit to Your Will“

How can I proclaim that I am ready to submit to His Will and then disobey? What will I ’?”do if Allah responds to my open declaration with, “la Labbaik

Who’s Who

The Umayyad dynasty was at its peak of tyrannical rule in the beginning of the second century AH. Hisham ibn e Abdul Malik, the crown prince and heir apparent of the kingdom was trying to reach the Black Stone after circumambulating the K’aaba during the Hajj pilgrimage and failing miserably because of the immense crowds of .Hajjis in Masjid al Haram

The Hajjis were unaware of everything around them except their resolve to perform their rituals with as much devotion as possible. They were all dressed alike, uttering the same phrases, moving in the same direction, i.e. towards Allah. They were totally oblivious of the worldly positions and status of anybody around them. They were .performing their duty with purity of heart and soul

However, the courtiers, accompanying him from Syria, wished to establish his personal identity as

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the future king of the Islamic Kingdom. The Hajj rituals were of no consequence to them. The pleasure of the ‘heir apparent’ was more important to them than the .pleasure of Almighty Allah

Hisham made a final effort to reach the Hajr e Aswad, to complete the ritualistic act of kissing or touching it, but failed. He returned to his companions, who had placed a

chair on a raised mound, to make him visible to all. Hisham sat on the chair and started watching the activities of the Hajjis from afar. All the Syrians, who had come to perform Hajj, flocked around him, gaining importance from close proximity to him. They also started enjoying the spectacle of pure devotion that was obvious in the .actions and countenance of the Hajjis performing their rituals

Suddenly, their eyes caught sight of a handsome person. His piety was evident from his entire appearance. His devotion and submission to the Will of the Almighty was written all over his face. Draped in the two cloths of the Hajjis, he quietly circumambulated the K'aaba and then slowly but steadily moved towards the Black .Stone

The multitude had not decreased, the crowds were still jostling one another as they moved, but the crowds automatically moved aside, as if it was understood, by all and sundry, that they must make way for him. The pious devotee kissed the Black Stone and, stopping for a few moments to offer a prayer retraced his steps calmly and left. The crowds became

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.one huge wave once again with no signs of any passageway at all

The Syrians, with their Crown Prince in their midst, watched the entire scene with amazement, and certainly not without envy. One of courtiers, spellbound by what he ’?had seen, turned towards Hisham and said, ‘Who is he

Hisham knew it was Ali ibn al-Husain Zain ul Abedin (‘a), but pretended to be ignorant ’.and replied, ‘I have no idea

The people standing around overheard the conversation but did not have the courage to speak up before Hisham, the cruel tyrant, whose sword was always dripping with blood, the blood of innocent people. Identifying the Imam (‘a) would have meant .certain death

One person among them was the famous and extremely popular poet of the Arab

world, Hammam ibn e Ghalib, known by his penname, Farazdaq. He could not restrain his annoyance by the show of ignorance on the part of Hisham. He stepped forward and said, 'I know him.' Then, climbing up a mound close to the one Hisham was sitting on; he began to recite adulatory verses, which he had composed impromptu, in his loud attractive voice. Addressing Hisham, he said,

Every pebble of Mecca, the K'aaba, the Mosque,

and the dust outside, know him all

The son of the Prophet (s); the pious, the pure,

most loved and respected by all.

You say you don't know him? The loss is but yours,

for his greatness abides beyond measure,

All Arabs, non-Arabs, do know him for sure,

in their hearts he resides, and forever.

The fury of Hisham

knew no bounds. He ordered the allowance given to Farazdaq from the State treasury to be discontinued with immediate effect. Next, after the Pilgrimage was over, he imprisoned him in Asphan, a place between Mecca and Medina. This was his punishment for declaring his love for the Holy Prophet and his Household (s). Farazdaq remained undeterred. While in prison, he continued to criticize Hisham, through verses deriding his actions.

When Imam Ali ibn al Husain, Zain ul Abedin ('a) heard about Farazdaq's imprisonment and the reason behind it, he sent him some money through a messenger. Farazdaq, the honorable, returned it, saying, 'I composed those verses

as an expression of my belief and faith, only for the pleasure of Allah, not to make you ’.feel obliged

The Imam (‘a) sent the money again with the message, ‘The Almighty is well aware of your intentions and actions and will surely reward you accordingly. This small gift will, ’.in no way, effect that reward. It will only gladden my heart

Farazdaq, despite his urgent need of money, accepted it only because he did not wish .(to sadden his Imam (‘a

A Misconception

Imam Ali ibn e Musa ar Reza (‘a) was forced to migrate from Medina to Khurasan by the reigning caliph Mamoon ar Rashid, and, accept the position of heir apparent. He, realizing he had no option, insisted on declaring he would not be involved in the affairs of government. His brother, Zaid ibn e Musa, was creating havoc in Medina and inciting the people to rebel

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.against the caliph

Mamoon realized the seriousness and delicacy of the situation and, despite being furious, did not order his arrest or execution. He played the diplomacy card, and hypocritically advertised the great respect and affection he had for Imam Reza (‘a). .He succeeded in confusing and, thus, pacifying the people of Medina

One day, while still in Medina, Imam Reza (‘a) was addressing a public gathering. Zaid stood on a raised platform in one corner of the crowd, and starting distracting the crowd. He wanted the crowd to lend him their ears, not his brother. He loudly and repeatedly claimed that he was the descendant of the noblest Household, and that the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s) were special, purer than all other people, and .thus, deserved greater respect

Imam Reza (‘a) heard his words, and turning towards him in anger, addressed him in

.a humiliating manner

O Zaid, what do you think of yourself? You think you are better than all these people‘ here because of what you’ve heard grocers say? You count yourself among the descendants of the Holy Prophet (‘a), and claim that the fire of hell cannot touch you? Let me remove your misconception. The offspring of Lady Fatima Zahra (‘a) are but .four: Imam Hasan (‘a), Imam Husain (‘a) and their two sisters

If what you say is believed, then you are worthy of greater respect than your father, Musa ibn e Jafar (‘a). He was a pious servant of Allah. He spent his entire

life praying at night and fasting during the day. He obeyed the commands of the Almighty and served Islam until his last breath. He faced great oppression and suffered imprisonment because of it. He remained heavily chained during the years of .imprisonment, and, was finally poisoned to death in prison

You disobey Allah, and yet believe that you are equally honorable and deserving of salvation as he. You are then more fortunate, because you enjoy his status without bearing his suffering or performing any noble deed. You just inherited all the earned treasure and reward without lifting a finger. Most fortunate indeed! That’s what you :think! My grandfather, Imam Zain ul Abedin (‘a) explained

Those, among the Ahl al Bayt (‘a), who are pious and perform good deeds, win double‘ the reward. Those who are disobedient to Allah and do evil, earn double the punishment, just as revealed in the Holy Quran for the wives of the Holy Prophet (s). The reason is that a member of this household performs two good deeds while performing one, because he, simultaneously, safegaurds the status of the Holy Prophet (s). While performing an evil act he, simultaneously, disgraces and defames ’.(the Holy Prophet (s

Saying this, the Imam addressed an Iraqi, named Hasan ibn e Musa Baghdadi, thus: ,‘How do the people of Iraq interpret this verse of the Quran

’?”This son of yours is not virtuous, therefore, not yours“

Baghdadi replied, ‘Some interpret it as it is; others argue that Allah’s saying that he

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is not your son, means he is not from Noah’s (‘a) seed, because they cannot accept the fact that a Prophet’s son should be declared disobedient, impious. They believe he ’.must be the offspring of Noah’s (‘a) wife from an earlier, evil husband

The Imam (‘a) said, ‘Absolutely incorrect! He was Noah’s (‘a) own son, of his seed. The disobedient, impious actions of the son amputated the spiritual relationship between them. Therefore, Almighty Allah declared that he could not be included among the pious, virtuous individuals. Our family also faces the same situation. A spiritual relationship purely depends on piety, virtuous deeds and total submission to the Will of Allah. Whoever obeys Allah belongs to us, whether he is related or not in seed. Whoever is disobedient, even if he is the real offspring of Lady Fatimah Zahra (‘a), will .not be hers

You yourself, Baghdadi, even though not related in blood or seed, will be one of us, if ’.you become a faithful believer submitting to the Will of Allah

Allah’s Help

Allah’s Help the Best

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s) found his financial conditions in a critical state and sat wondering how he could improve them. His wife suggested he visit the Holy Prophet (s) and seek his help. He decided it was the best option he had. Next day, he arrived at the mosque and sat down, waiting for a chance to speak to the .(Holy Prophet (s

While mentally rehearsing what he should ask for, he suddenly heard

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the Holy Prophet (s) say, “I shall certainly help anyone who asks for my help, but he who refuses to ask any man for help is actually made self-sufficient by his Creator.” Hearing this, the man found he could not make any request for help, and returned home hoping to find a miraculous change of circumstances. Unfortunately, things .were as he had left them

Next day he gathered courage to speak up and appeal for help, but no sooner had he entered the mosque he heard the Holy Prophet (s) repeat what he had said the day before. Discouraged, he returned home to find the situation as dismal as ever. Depressed, he decided that, come what may, he would definitely place his plea the next day. This time, he went straight to a place close to the Holy Prophet (s) and sat .down only to hear an exact repeat of the same advice

He thought to himself, ‘This is not mere coincidence, it must be true, it must mean something for me,’ and, immediately, a strange sense of relief overcame him. He got up and walked away, deciding that he would never ask for human help. He wondered how he could use the physical and mental faculties he had been provided by his Creator to earn a living. The easiest would be to cut wood from the forest trees and .sell it in the market. He went to his neighbour and asked him to lend him his axe

Taking it, he

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reached the forest, cut a huge pile of wood, strapped it and went to the marketplace. He sold all the wood in good time and held enough money in his palm to feed and clothe his children. In a short while, he became self-sufficient, bought his own axe and enjoyed the fruit of his labour. He soon became a wealthy tradesman with slaves to assist him. However, he did not give up cutting wood himself. He had learnt the value .of work

One day the Holy Prophet (s) came to meet him and smiling, said, “Did I not tell you that I would definitely help anyone who asked for my help, but he who refuses to ask ”?for human help finds self-sufficiency from his Creator

It was the wide, open territory of Mina during the Hajj season. Imam Jafar al- Sadiq .('a) was sitting in his corner surrounded by his friends, other Hajjis, eating grapes

A poor man passed by and asked for help. The Imam offered him a handful of grapes, but the beggar refused them and demanded money. The Imam ('a) said, 'I do not have money to give you. The poor man went away, disappointed. After walking away, he decided to accept the grapes and returned. 'O.K, I'll accept the grapes.' The Imam .('a) said those offered to him were no longer there

After some time, another poor man passed by and begged for alms. The Imam ('a) took another bunch of grapes and offered them to him. The

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poor man took them and said, 'Thanks to Almighty Allah for providing me with fresh sustenance.' Hearing the words of the poor man the Imam ('a) stopped him, and offered both palms full of grapes to him. The poor man took them happily and .thanked the Almighty once again

The Imam ('a) stopped him again, and asked the companion sitting next to him how much money he had. His companion came up with ٢٠ dirhams. The Imam ('a) ordered .him to give them to the poor man

The poor man, overwhelmed, said, 'O Lord, the Almighty! All praise is due only to You, '.for You alone bestow blessings on us, and You have no Partner

The Imam('a) immediately took off his cloak and handed it over to the poor man. This time he started thanking the Imam ('a) for his generosity. The Imam ('a) bade him .farewell and asked him to move on

The companions wondered why their Imam ('a) refused to give him anything after he stopped thanking God and began thanking him. They were suddenly reminded of the ,Ayah

.’Only You do we Worship and only You do we ask for Help‘

The Guided One

Hisham ibn e Abdul Malik went to Mecca to perform Hajj. He was the ruling Umayyad caliph of the time. After Hajj, he ordered his officers to bring all those people who had been the companions of the Holy Prophet (s) or lived during that period. He was informed that no such person could be found, because they had all

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died. He then asked for those who had been the companions of the Holy Prophet’s (s) companions, called ‘tabe’een’, so that he could have a soul-stirring discourse with .them. Taoos e Yamani, a tabe’ee, was summoned, henceforth

Taoos entered the room where the caliph was sitting, and greeting him with ‘Assalam o Alaikum’, took his shoes off and sat down. Everything he did, from the moment he entered, was against the monarchical culture of the Umayyads. Finally, he looked at the caliph and said, ‘Hisham, how are you?’ That acted as the last slash of the chips on .Hisham’s shoulder

He flew into a rage and said, ‘Do you not know how to behave in the presence of a ’?caliph

.What do you mean?’ enquired Taoos‘

Why did you take your shoes off in front of me, greet me without saying Ameer ul‘ Momineen, sit down without my permission, and audaciously ask after my welfare as ’?my equal

Taoos replied. ‘Everyday, I take my shoes off five times in front of the Almighty, yet He is never enraged with me. I did not address you as Ameer ul Momineen, because quite a few believers are disgruntled with your caliphate and rule, so you are certainly not the Ameer of all believers. I called you by your name, because the Almighty, while recalling the events of His Prophets, calls them by their names, thus: Ya Daood, Ya

.Yahya, Ya Eesa

On the contrary, He mentions Abu Lahb by his title in the Holy Quran. Why I

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sat down without seeking permission is because I heard Imam Ali ('a) affirm, 'If you wish to see an inhabitant of hell, then look at that person who, while he himself is seated, everyone around him is standing.'

.Hisham was visibly shaken by Taoos' reply. He urged him to advise him further

'Ameer ul Momineen, Imam Ali ibn e Abi Talib ('a) said that there are monstrous snakes and scorpions in hell, whose only duty is to bite and sting those rulers who do not treat others with justice and fair play.'

.Saying this, Taoos stood up, put his shoes on and left the room

Hisham looked vacantly into space. Probably his soul had been stirred, even if, temporarily.

In Allah's Protection

A group of Muslims migrated to Abyssinia, on the advice of the Holy Prophet (s), to save themselves from being persecuted by the polytheistic Quraysh of Mecca. They always had their ears open for any news confirming the end of persecution and polytheism in Mecca, but in vain. After some years, a rumour was heard that all the Quraysh of Mecca had given up their ignorant ways and beliefs and accepted Islam. The Muslims tried to confirm those rumours, but could not. However, some of them who were more homesick than the others, decided to go home to learn the truth. Among them was Usman ibn e Maz'oon. Later, he became one of the close companions of the Holy Prophet (s).

When he reached the outskirts of Mecca, he realized that what they had heard was

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false. Persecution was at its height and the Muslims were suffering badly. He was in a dilemma. He could neither return, for it was far across the sea; nor enter Mecca, for fear of greater persecution. Suddenly, an idea struck him. If he managed to get the .protection of an influential person, he would be safe, according to the Arab custom

He entered Mecca in the darkness of the night and went straight to the house of Walid ibn e Mughayira Makhzoomi, his cousin, who was an elite Quraysh. He requested his protection and got it. Next day, Walid took Usman to the precincts of the K'aaba and announced that Usman was in his protection from that moment onwards. Anyone who harassed him would, in fact, be harassing Walid. Usman resumed his life peacefully in Mecca, his homeland. He attended the various functions organized by .the citizens of Mecca and was treated with respect

However, his conscience pricked him when he saw his fellow Muslims being treated so cruelly in public and private, while he was living comfortably, just because he was protected by an elite. When he could no longer rest in peace, he went to Walid and said, 'I am extremely grateful to you for providing me with protection. But, I want to '.be with my brothers-in faith and share their ordeals with them

'.Dear nephew,' he said, 'Probably my protection did not meet your expectations'

Usman replied,'You were most kind and truly fulfilled your pledge. The truth is that I

'.do not want to live in the protection of anyone but Allah, anymore

If that is what you want, then come with me to the same place, and renounce my' '.protection before everyone

'.You are right, let's go'

They both reached the outer precincts of the K'aaba and waited for the chiefs to gather there. Then, Walid proclaimed, 'Usman has come here with me, today, to ',renounce my protection

Usman said, ‘He is right. I must admit that he fulfilled his pledge most honorably and gave me no reason to complain. However, I am renouncing his protection because I '.do not wish to live in the protection of anyone, besides Allah

Thus, Usman started to live unprotected by anyone other than Allah. He noticed that nobody harassed him and life continued as before. He attended the discourses and gatherings of the Quraysh as before. Those days, the famous Arab poet, Lubaid ibn e Rabee’a, had come to Mecca. He had been invited to read his latest poem in one of the huge gatherings of the Quraysh. This poem was extremely popular and considered a masterpiece of Arab literature. Lubaid, one night, addressing a huge :audience began

All, besides the Creator of the universe, is false, the only truth is One

(The Holy Prophet (s) praised this verse as the truest verse written by the Arabs)

Before Lubaid could recite the second line, Usman, sitting among the crowd, ’applauded loudly, ‘Brilliant! True! Most true! Everything besides God is false

:Lubaid,elated, recited the second line

All, everything is mortal, all

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blessings are perishable

Usman was heard again, loud and clear, ‘False! This statement is true for this world ’.only. The blessings of the Hereafter are eternal

The crowd was annoyed by Usman’s interruptions. They were amazed how a person, who was living in someone’s protection a little while ago, dared to express his faith by contradicting a renowned poet in the middle of his elocution, in such a large gathering. Besides, it was customary to remain silent in the presence of the Elders. No one dared to speak without permission. They wondered at the audacity of Usman to interrupt and criticize their guest speaker and renowned poet while belonging to a severely

oppressed minority. They all looked at him angrily, deprecatingly. They then asked .Lubaid to repeat his verses

’!Lubaid repeated the first line, and Usman cried, ‘True! Most true

Lubaid repeated the second line, and Usman repeated, ‘False! The blessings of the ’.hereafter are eternal

This time it was Lubaid’s turn to get angry. He addressed the crowd, looking very ,grim

O members of the Quraysh tribe! By god, never before did such insolent and uncouth‘ people disrupt your functions and literary gatherings. What has happened now? ’?Where have these people come from

One angry member of the audience tried to placate him. He said.’ You continue with your rendition and pay no attention to him. He’s a fool, and not the only one in Mecca. A few other fools, who have cropped up in our midst, are his brethren-in-faith. They have been thrown out of

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’.our religion and chosen a new faith

Usman harshly rebuked him. The angry man could tolerate no more. He turned around and gave Usman a resounding slap on his face. Usman’s eye started bleeding. Another man from the audience cried out, ‘Usman, you did not value the protection of ’.a good man. Had you stayed with him, your eye would not be bleeding today

Usman said, ‘The protection of Allah is the best and strongest. His protection is accompanied by contentment and dignity. As for this eye, it has gained a status that ’.the other eye longs for

’.Walid came forward and said, ‘Usman, I’m willing to offer you my protection again

But I have decided to never place myself in the protection of anyone besides Allah,“

.replied Usman

The Importance of Work

Work not– Just Pray

An extremely anxious and perplexed man visited Hazrat Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a), and begged him to pray that Allah would increase his sustenance and relieve him of all .financial stress

’.The Imam (‘a) answered, ‘I shall certainly not pray for you

’?The poor man sighed and asked, ‘But why not? What have I done

The Imam (‘a) replied, ‘You know perfectly well that Allah has devised means and ways of attaining prosperity. He has ordered you to leave your house and earn a living through hard work. You refuse to obey the law and foolishly hope praying for you will ’.bring you prosperity

You work–I pray

A number of pilgrims were narrating their experiences of Hajj to Imam Jafar al- Sadiq (‘a), and recounting their views about their fellow

pilgrims. One person was immensely impressed by a fellow pilgrim and said, ‘He was truly pious and an indefatigable worshipper of Allah. Whenever we broke journey to rest for the night, he retired to a secluded place, spread out his prayer mat and got ’.engrossed in the worship of Allah

The Imam (‘a) enquired, ‘Who looked after the rest of his affairs? Who tended his ’?camel

He replied, ‘Obviously, we performed all those duties for Allah’s pleasure. He ’.remained absorbed in the holy acts, and had no time for such menial chores

The Imam (‘a) replied, ‘No wonder you achieved more than he did with all his piety .and worship

A New Convert

Two neighbors became good friends. One was a Christian, the other, Muslim. They often discussed their religions to see what was more conducive to a civilized way of life, and then they adopted it. The Muslim presented Islam with all its material and .spiritual benefits, so the Christian, one day, embraced Islam

.A few days later, earlier than dawn, somebody knocked at his door

.Whose there?’ asked the new convert, a little apprehensive‘

I am your neighbour. It will soon be time for the morning obligatory prayer (Fajr), so‘ wear your clothes, perform ablution and come with me to the mosque. Today, we will offer our prayers with the congregation. The new Muslim consented, and they both .reached the mosque

Fasting is a means of gaining nearness to God,’ the neighbor said. The convert‘ .declared the intention of fasting for the day

Since there was some time

left for the call for prayer (Aazaan), they both offered some units of prayer for spiritual satisfaction. Soon it was time, and they offered their Fajr prayer. After reciting all the supererogatory prayers advised by religious leaders, the convert got .up to go home

’?Where are you going‘

.Home,’ he replied‘

’.Hold on. Its now time to read the Holy Quran‘

He placed the Quran before him, and they both read till the bright rays of the sun fell .on them. The convert rose to go home, but the Muslim stopped him again

This time he stopped him for the Zuhr prayer, as only an hour remained. After the afternoon prayer and all the supererogatory prayers had been read, it was almost time for the evening, Asr, prayer. Having completed that, the man said he was going home to break his fast after sunset. His neighbor advised him to offer the Maghrib .prayer. He agreed. After that, he stood up to leave

.Only the I'sha prayer is left. After that you can go home.' The neighbor urged'

.After offering the night prayer, the new convert went home

.There was a knock at his door again, at the time of Sehr

.Whose there?' he asked'

'.Wear your clothes and come, we will offer our prayer in the mosque'

Excuse me. I retuned to my religion after staying with you yesterday. Go find' somebody useless who has nothing to do but pray. I am a family man, and need to provide for them. I have other duties and responsibilities to fulfill. I cannot

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'!just pray to God all day and survive on nothing. Get lost

:Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) related this incident to his followers and said

Thus, a pious and God fearing Muslim converted a non-believer to Islam. But, it took' the new convert only one day to give it up because of the rigid and extreme measures adopted by the Muslim. Remember, force and rigidity lead to unease, frustration, and discontentment. The Ummayads used force to make people obey them, and received nothing but contempt. Promote religion affectionately, courteously, mildly, with mutual consent. Our methods should make people embrace Islam by choice, and '.practice it according to the level of their faith and energy- both physical and mental

Just Distribution of Work

The Holy Prophet (s) and his companions alighted from their horses and started unloading their camels to break their journey. Everyone agreed on slaughtering a goat and cooking its meat for dinner. One of them offered to slaughter the animal. .Another took removing the skin upon himself. A third volunteered to cook the meat

The Holy Prophet (s) said, 'I'll collect the wood for the fire from the surrounding wilderness.' All his (s) companions cried in unison, 'Why must you work, with us around? We feel honored to serve you while you rest. We will complete the task in no '.time

The Holy Prophet (s) replied. 'I know that you can accomplish this in no time, but God doesn't befriend anyone who considers himself better than his friends and worthy of '.their respect

Saying this he

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walked towards the woods, and returned with a pile of dry twigs and leaves enough to .light the fire while the others finished their work

Division of Labour

After Imam Ali ('a) and Lady Fatimah Zahra ('a) got married, they began their new life together. They organized their belongings as needed and went to the Holy Prophet (s) for his advice in the division of domestic chores. 'Guide us, O Prophet of Allah (s), as to .(how we should divide our domestic chores between us,' requested Imam Ali ('a

The Holy Prophet (s) declared, 'Ali, you will do all the chores outside the house, while '.Fatimah will perform all those inside the house

Lady Fatimah ('a) was overjoyed with his division. She said, 'I am so relieved to have nothing to do with men.' Ali ('a) would purchase wood, grain, groceries and other essential items from the market, while she would grind the flour, cook the meals, do

the laundry and keep the house clean. Besides, whenever Imam Ali (‘a) found extra .time he would help with the chores inside the house

One day the Holy Prophet (s) visited them and found them both working together. He (s) asked, ‘Who is the more exhausted of you two, for me to assist?’ ‘Fatimah,’ said Ali .((‘a

.He (s) sent her to rest and helped Ali (‘a) to complete her chores

Islam was in its early days and Imam Ali (‘a) had to accompany the Muslim army for ,Jihad more than often. He provided her with all the essential items, but

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whenever the need arose, Lady Fatimah (‘a) went to the market herself and .purchased whatever she needed in those days

Life went on smoothly until the family grew and the house was echoing with the innocent joyful laughter of children. However, the burden of work inside the house had increased manifold. One day Imam Ali (‘a) noticed that grinding, cooking, carrying waterbags from the well, washing and cleaning, besides feeding, bathing, and babysitting the children had left Fatimah (‘a) with sore hands, a scarred back and .worn-out clothes. Despite his help, she was busy all the time

Sorrowful on her condition, he advised her to request her father for a serving woman. Lady Fatimah (‘a) agreed. She went to see her father, but found him busy conversing .with some people. She returned home without voicing her request

However, the Holy Prophet (s) noticed her coming and going, and understood that she had come for something important. Next morning, he went to visit her to find out the reason for her visit the day before. At the door, he greeted the inmates in a loud, clear ’.voice, ‘Assalam o Alaikum

Both Ali (‘a) and Fatimah (‘a) were resting. They felt embarrassed that they were still resting, and did not respond aloud. It was the Holy Prophet’s (s) habit to repeat the

greeting thrice and return if he failed to get a response. Imam Ali ('a) knew his habit, so he quickly replied, 'Walaikum Assalam, O Prophet of Allah (s). Do come

in.'

The Holy Prophet (s) sat at the head side of his daughter's bed and asked, 'You came to see me yesterday, Fatimah, and then returned. I am sure it was important. What did you come for, my child?'

Imam Ali ('a) replied, 'If you permit me, I will tell you why Fatimah went to see you. I sent her to you. The reason was that her chores within the house have increased manifold. It grieves me to see her sore hands, scarred back and dusty clothes because of working all day long. I sent her to request you to provide a woman to assist her.'

The Holy Prophet (s) did not want any member of his family to enjoy facilities that were not available to the poor Muslims, especially the immigrants, who were in a state of extreme poverty in those days. He knew the spiritual level of his daughter's faith, so he said, 'Would you prefer it if I give you something better?'

'We will be pleased to accept, Ya Rasool Allah (s).'

'Everyday, before going to bed, recite Allah o Akbar, ۳۴ times, Alhamdolillah, ۳۳ times and Subhanallah, ۳۳ times. It will give you more strength to perform your chores than any helping hand.'

Lady Fatimah ('a) had not uncovered her face until this moment. She removed the cloth from her face and said, 'My pleasure lies in what pleases my Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (s).'

Earn ones living

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) was busy working in his garden, wearing working clothes with spade

in hand, when one of his friends, Abu Umro Shaibani arrived. Seeing him drenched in perspiration because of the heat and labour, he thought there was need of a labourer, .so the Imam (‘a) had opted to work himself

’.He stepped forward and said, ‘Let me help you finish this work

The Imam (‘a) said, ‘No. I like working on the farm with my own hands. It is necessary for man to face the heat of the sun and feel the exhaustion of earning ones own ’.living

Cause and Effect

Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a) left his home and, as usual, proceeded towards the jungle. He was familiar with the untrodden paths of the jungle. He was carrying something on his back. On the way, a passerby asked him, ‘Ali, what is that weight you are carrying on ’?your back

.Date-palms, Insha Allah!’ he replied‘

.Date-palms?’ He clearly did not understand what Ali (‘a) meant‘

Some years later, he noticed an orchard of date-palms, stand tall and elegant where Ali (‘a) had planted the saplings he had nurtured with his own hands. His amazement, then at Ali’s (‘a) remark, vanished when he saw the full-grown trees with his own .eyes

Traits of Nobility

Mistaken Concept of a Ruler

One day a nomadic Arab entered Medina. He went straight to the mosque to meet the Holy Prophet (s) and demand gold, silver and other forms of wealth from him. The Holy Prophet (s) was sitting, as usual, surrounded by friends and companions, .discussing religious issues or the personal problems of some Muslims

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Arab walked up to him and boldly asked for financial support. The Holy Prophet (s) took out some money and gave it to him. The uncouth Arab scoffed at the amount received and insolently demanded more as his right. The Muslims, exceedingly annoyed by the disrespectful behavior of the uncivilized nomad, decided to punish .him. The Holy Prophet (s) raised his hand to restrain them from any reaction

He (s) took the nomad to his house and tried giving him something else that could satisfy his needs. Meanwhile, the nomad looked around and realized that there was no similarity between other rulers and him (s). He (s) actually did not possess what he was demanding from him (s). He was embarrassed and thanked the Holy Prophet (s) .for his generous help

The Holy Prophet (s) said, ‘You spoke very insolently in the mosque and angered the Muslims present there. I’m afraid they will harm you if you do not go back to the ’.mosque and declare your satisfaction in their presence

The nomad agreed. The Holy Prophet (s) returned to the mosque and said, ‘Friends, the Arab is now satisfied with me and has no complaints. He would like to ensure you ’.all

The Arab then thanked the Holy Prophet (s) as he had done earlier, and all the .Muslims were relieved

After his departure, the Holy Prophet (s) addressed the gathering, “Such people can be compared to the camel which, annoyed with his owner, started running towards the wilderness. His owner started

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running after him. Those who happened to be watching, tried to help, and shouting loudly, started chasing the already scared animal. Frantic, it ran even faster. The

owner stopped running and cried loudly, ‘Please stop running after my camel. I’ll .manage it myself. I know how to deal with it.’ Everyone stopped running

The owner then took some fodder in his hand and walked towards the camel. The camel, too, stopped running. The owner placed the fodder near its mouth, took hold of .the bridle and returned, with the camel totally calmed down

Had I not prevented you from reacting severely, the unfortunate man would have lost his life in a state of idolatry. You have witnessed today, the result of affection and ”.kindness, as opposed to force and harshness

Friends and Foes Alike

After the martyrdom of Imam Ali (‘a), Muawiya ibn e Abu Sufyan finally acquired total dictatorial control over the Islamic state. He often met with the followers of Imam Ali (‘a) and teased them so that they should say something against their Maula, but he .remained unsuccessful

He wanted them to admit that they were foolish in following and obeying Ali (‘a); had suffered immense losses because of adhering with his principles; had gained nothing of value by associating with him; were sorry to have sided with him and opposed Muawiya; wished to make amends and befriend Muawiya; but, in vain. Not one faithful believer could he find saying anything against him (‘a). Each one mourned his (‘a) loss, terming it as

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.’indescribable, eternal grief‘

The love and regard of the faithful for their Commander (‘a) grew even stronger after his martyrdom. They made greater sacrifices to establish the teachings of Islam as learnt from their Master, now that he was no longer among them. His loss created a greater sense of responsibility in them and inflamed them with a desire to lay their lives down for him (‘a), his teachings and practice. Muawiya’s efforts to suppress them .(only helped ignite and strengthen their resolve to follow their Imam (‘a

One of Imam Ali's (‘a) renowned followers was ‘Adi ibn e Haatim. He was the chief of the tribe of Taee. He had many sons. He, his sons and his tribesmen were considered Ali's (‘a) gallant warriors. His three sons named Turfa, Tareef and Taarif were .(martyred in the battle of Siffin, fighting alongside their Imam (‘a

After Imam Ali (‘a), Muawiya occupied the seat of ruler by force and deceit. He summoned ‘Adi ibn e Haatim to Damascus. With the intention of causing pain, he ’?asked him, ‘What happened to your sons

’.(They were martyred in the battle of Siffin fighting alongside Imam Ali (‘a‘

’.Ali did not treat you fairly‘

’?What makes you say that‘

’.He sent your sons into the front line of battle and kept his own sons in the rear‘

’.On the contrary, I think I have not served Ali (‘a) fairly‘

’?Why do you say that‘

’.I should have died and saved him, but he got martyred while I still live‘

Muawiya was disappointed again for

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the umpteenth time. He decided to change his tactics, and asked ‘Adi to describe Ali .(‘a) as he had known him from very close quarters

Excuse me, I'd rather not praise him in your presence,’ said ‘Adi, knowing full well‘ .(how envious he was of his Maula, Ameer ul Momineen, Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a

.I assure you I'm interested,’ insisted Muawiya‘

:Adi then began his favorite discourse‘

Allah be my witness, Imam Ali (‘a) was very far-sighted and supremely courageous.‘

He exemplified justice, fairness and truth. He judged with knowledge and conviction. His greatest assets were knowledge and wisdom. Worldly pomp and show, glitter and glory, disgusted him. His favorite time was the night, with its solitude and quiet. He wept profusely while worshipping his Lord, and spent his time in meditation, observation, and introspection. He preferred a simple lifestyle and wore inexpensive clothes. He behaved like one of us whilst among us. He never turned down anyone's request for anything he possessed, and sat next to us when we went to visit him, never maintaining a distance. Despite his affectionate demeanor, everyone was awe-.struck, and did not dare speak in his presence

His spiritual superiority and purity of character, made it impossible to look at him straight in the eye. His smile was very attractive, exposing a perfect set of teeth, which looked like pearls in a row. He respected pious and God-fearing individuals, and was extremely caring towards the weak and downtrodden. The powerful never feared injustice from him; the weak

.never despaired of his justice

With God as my witness, I saw him with my own eyes, standing in his prayer niche, late one night. The tears ran down his cheeks and beard. He was trembling as if bitten by a snake and weeping like a person extremely troubled and anxious. I feel I can :hear his voice right now. Addressing the world, he said

O mortal world, do not try to tempt me towards yourself. Leave me alone. Go and" deceive someone else. I have divorced you thrice and do not wish to reunite with you. Your pleasures are insignificant in my eyes, and folly it is to revere you. Woe! O, Woe! '".My journey is long, my subsistence negligible, and friends, but few

Muawiya was struck by the way Ali's ('a) admirers loved him. His eyes filled with tears, for he couldn't deny the truth. He said, 'May God bless Ali ibn e Abi Talib. You have '?certainly described him accurately. How do you feel his loss

'.I feel like a mother whose son has been beheaded in her lap'

'?You can never forget him, can you'

'?What do you think? Will present-day circumstances allow me to forget him'

Praying for others

It was Thursday night. The mother was facing the Kaaba, praying to her Lord, while her little son sat beside her, listening carefully. In spite of his age he watched every movement of his mother, standing, bending, prostrating. He heard her pray for every Muslim man and woman he knew and did

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not, by name. She prayed that they be blessed with honour, contentment, goodness .and piety. Now he wanted to hear what she would ask for herself

He kept awake for as long as she prayed, only to learn what she would ask for herself. The night passed and the new day dawned. Hasan ('a) asked his mother, Lady Fatima .Zahra ('a) why she did not pray for herself at all, and kept praying for others all night

His mother answered, 'My dear Son! First come your neighbours and friends, then '.your home, then yourself

Courtesy

Imam Hasan ('a) and Imam Husain ('a) were still children, when, one day, while on their way to the mosque, to offer the congregational prayers, they spied an aged person performing ablution (wuzu) for the prayer. It struck them both that he was not .performing it correctly. They stopped, realizing it was their duty to correct him

They also realized that if they told him that his wuzu was not correct it could make him feel humiliated, and he might either refuse to admit it and stubbornly persist in doing it his way, i.e. the wrong way; or feel unhappy whenever he performed wuzu correctly, by recalling the humiliating moment when he was corrected by two children. They

knew that criticism causes resistance and stubbornness, and seldom mends, thus fails to achieve the desired result. On the contrary, courtesy and humility can overpower .the most ignorant, most resistant and most arrogant

Imam Hasan (‘a) whispered something in

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his brother’s ear and they both took a tumbler full of water and stood within hearing .distance of the old man

.(I can perform ablution better than you,’ said Hasan (‘a‘

.(No. I can perform it in the best way possible,’ said Husain (‘a‘

.(Let us find somebody to judge who is better,’ said Hasan (‘a‘

They walked towards the old man and greeted him, ‘Assalam o alaikum, worthy Muslim! Can you do us a favor? My brother and I want you to judge which of us performs ablution as ordained? Will you watch us very carefully and point out any ’?discrepancy that you notice

Certainly,’ replied the old man, overjoyed to judge the Holy Prophet’s (s)‘ .grandchildren

First Imam Husain (‘a) performed ablution very slowly, intentionally. The old man, immediately, realized how wrong he was, and decided to correct his own mistakes after observing the elder child and being sure. Then Imam Hasan (‘a) performed .ablution in exactly the same way with the same speed

The old man tearfully embraced them and said, ‘Noble children of the noblest family! Who could have pointed out my mistakes to me more affectionately and convincingly? ’.May Allah bless you and reward you for guiding me aright

True Humility

A caravan was proceeding towards Mecca via Medina. They stopped in Medina for a

.few days and proceeded on their journey again

On the way, a friend joined them. While individually greeting them, his eye fell on one person who was generously helping everyone with their chores. He recognized him instantly and asked the

travellers if they knew who he was. They replied in the negative. 'He joined us in Medina, but after these last few days of travelling together we can easily say that he is extremely pious, virtuous and God-fearing. We did not ask him, but he is always busy helping anyone who needs assistance in some way or the other.'

The friend of the travellers said, 'I am sure you do not recognize him, for if you did, you would never allow him to do your petty chores.'

The travellers, stupefied, asked, 'After all, who is he?'

'He is Ali ibn al Husain, Zain ul Abedin ('a)', he replied.

The entire caravan was overwhelmed with shame and regret for not enquiring who he was when he joined them. They rushed towards him to kiss the hands that had performed all those menial tasks for them.

They complained, crying, 'Why did you hide your identity? We could have committed an act of disrespect and never forgiven ourselves for it.'

The Imam ('a) replied, 'I intentionally joined your caravan because you did not know me. Whenever I travel with acquaintances, they treat me with great respect and affection because of my grandfather, the Holy Prophet (s), and do not permit me to do anything at all. I, therefore try to accompany people who do not recognize me, so that I can look after myself, do my own work, and without introducing myself, earn the pleasure of serving others.'

My Duty is My Duty

The journey had been long and tiresome. Finally, they had

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reached an oasis, and every rider eagerly got off his animal to refresh himself, perform ablution and prepare to offer his prayers. The Holy Prophet (s) was also accompanying them on this journey. After alighting from his camel, he moved towards the water. Suddenly, on second thought, he returned towards his camel. Everyone thought he was going to resume the journey, and sighed with fatigue. They were all ears for the call to remount, when, to their utter surprise, they saw the Holy Prophet (s) tying his camel.

After doing the needful, he returned to his companions, but was accosted by cries from all sides, 'O Messenger of Allah (s)! Why did you not let one of us perform that task for you instead of going all the way back to do it yourself? We are always on the lookout to do something for you and feel honoured, but you never give us a chance.'

'It is unwise to depend on others, or ask for their help in anything you can do yourself, be it as small as getting a green branch to brush your teeth. You must consider your work to be your duty, and not become a burden on others.'

Bearing ones own Burden

One day Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) with a few companions, was walking towards the house of a friend who was unwell. On the way, his shoe string broke and the shoe kept slipping off, making him slow down. He took the shoe off and continued to walk, barefooted. His

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companion, Abdullah ibn e Abi Yafoor noticed, and quickly took off his own shoe string and offered it to the Imam ('a), so that he could put his shoe on while ibn e Yafoor walked barefooted.

The Imam ('a) did not respond to this act of respectfulness. He ('a) turned his face

away and continued walking without listening to ibne Yafoor’s pleas. When he went on insisting, Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) stopped, turned towards him and said, ‘If a person is faced with a problem, it is his duty to deal with it. It is unfair to shift the ’.burden onto someone else

Weightlifting Champion

A weight lifting championship was in progress and muscularly strong young men were participating in it. It so happened that the Holy Prophet (s) was passing by. He stopped and saw some youths trying to lift a heavy rock, one by one. He walked towards them ’?and asked, ‘What are you doing

We are having a weightlifting contest to decide who is the strongest amongst us,’‘ .they responded

’.Well,’ he said, if you wish, I can tell you which man is the strongest‘

That would be perfect. It will give us great pleasure to accept the verdict of someone‘ ’.as wise as you

All the young men waited eagerly for the Holy Prophet (s) to hold the strongest man by the arm and take him to the centre of the arena, raise his hand and present him to .the crowd as the victor of the tournament

,However, he (s) stood where he was

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.’and defined ‘true strength

First, he, among you, is the strongest, who gets infatuated with something and is‘ then enamoured by it, but he does not allow it to tempt him away from the path of truth and humanity, or contaminate him with vice. His love for goodness controls his .love for all else

Secondly, a person who is annoyed and enraged but controls his anger, speaks only

the truth, and does not let a volley of abusive language defile his tongue; he, among .you, is the strongest

Such a person, in a position of power and authority, never buckles down before threats or obstacles blocking his path, but acts prudently by always observing the ’.limits of truth and justice. He, among you, is the strongest

Duty towards a co–traveller

The capital of the Islamic state, in those days, was Kufa. All the citizens of the Muslim empire, including Syria, keenly awaited the important rules and decisions enforced by .the popular regime

One day, two travellers met each other while resting by the roadside. One was a Muslim, the other a follower of the former revealed Scriptures. He was a Zoroastrian, a Jew or a Christian. They exchanged greetings and found that one was heading for Kufa while the other to a place near Kufa. They decided to complete the journey together and part ways close to their destinations. The rest of the journey passed pleasantly, as they discussed various issues, and, time flew, bringing them to the .crossroads that led to their destinations. They separated

After

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a while, the Scripturist heard the sound of horse’s hooves, looked back and found his companion following him. He stopped and asked him, ‘Did you not say that you were ’?going to Kufa

’.The Muslim replied, “I did. My destination is Kufa

’.But there is only one road that goes to Kufa, and you have left it behind‘

I know, but I wanted to accompany you a little further. Our Holy Prophet (s) taught us‘ that when two people travel together, their companionship entails some duties towards each other. I am fulfilling my duty towards you. In a while, I will return to my

’.path

Oh, I see! Your Prophet influenced the people to this extent with his excellent conduct‘ ’.and behaviour! No wonder Islam spread with such speed

He was more astonished when he found that his companion and co- traveller was none other than the Caliph of the Muslim state, Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a). After a few days, .(he converted to Islam and became a loyal friend and close confidante of Imam Ali (‘a

Charity Concealed

It was an extremely dark night. The sky, overcast with clouds, portended more rain. Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) emerged from his house carrying a heavy load on his back. Coincidentally, a close companion, Muali ibn e Khanees, spied him leaving the house and thought it was not safe to allow him to proceed alone on such a dark night. He started following him, but maintained his distance so that the Imam (‘a) might not .send him back

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Following him silently, he heard something fall from the Imam’s (‘a) shoulder. He rushed to help and found him muttering under his breath, ‘Dear Lord, return to me ’.what has fallen

He greeted the Imam (‘a) and offered to help. The Imam recognising him, asked him to replace the fallen items. Kneeling on the ground, Muali picked up the loaves of bread that had fallen from the pile on the Imam’s (‘a) back. ‘Let me help you carry the .pile,’ he said, noticing the weight to be greater than one man could bear

’.No, it is unnecessary. I am more suitable for the job‘

Both started moving towards the Bani Saida area. The shelterless and poor lived there in large congregations. Ensuring that all the people were fast asleep, the Imam (‘a) placed his bag on the ground and soundlessly placed one loaf or two under each covering cloth. He made sure he had not missed anyone. He then signalled to Muali to

.leave with him

Muali, overwhelmed by the care with which he had ensured the next day's meal for every helpless person sleeping there, who would never learn who was providing them with it, asked, 'Are all these people your Shiah, and do they believe in your divine '?leadership? Is that why you are taking such care of them on such a stormy night

No, they do not believe in Imamate. If they did, I would have also placed salt with' '.their bread

The Right to Kill

Imam Ali ('a) was fatally wounded by the poisoned sword

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of Abdur Rahman ibn e Muljim (May Allah never forgive him) on the ۱۹th of Ramadan ۴۰ AH, while offering the Fajr prayers in Masjid e Kufa, in the state of prostration. He completed his prayer and went home with the help of those praying with him. Ibn e Muljim was caught escaping, and with his hands tied behind him, he was brought to .the mosque

The anger and fury of the people was at its height. They were waiting for an order from their Imam ('a), but their faces showed that they wanted to tear Ibn e Muljim alive. They would have done it, had the Imam ('a), who was the victim of his dastardly .act, allowed them

Imam Ali ('a) called for the murderer to be presented before him. He, then, asked him, '?'Was I not gracious towards you

'.You certainly were'

'?Then what was the reason for this murderous attack'

I cannot reveal. However, I placed this sword in poisoned water for ۴۰ days, and' '.prayed to God to make this sword kill the worst man on earth

'.So it shall, for you will be killed by this same sword in a few days'

:Imam Ali ('a) then addressed the members of his family gathered around him, thus

Sons of Abdul Muttalib! I warn you not to let your anger get the better of you. Do not' accuse anyone you think is involved in this conspiracy, without evidence, as that will '.lead to mob killing in the streets

He then addressed his first-born, Hasan

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:a), thus')

My son, if I survive this wound, I will mete out justice to him. However, if I die, strike' him but once, for he struck me but once, with the same sword. Do not cut off his nose, ears or tongue. The Holy Prophet (s) clearly forbade it, saying, "Avoid mutilating anyone as a punishment, even if it be a mad dog." Look after your prisoner's needs. '.Provide him with food and drink. See that he does not face any problem in my house

After Imam Ali ('a) passed away, Ibn e Muljim was struck only once by the same .sword that he had prepared for himself. He died on the spot

The Power to Forgive

Abdul Maalik ibn e Marwan died after a tyrannical ۲۱ years of terror. His son, Walid succeeded him as ruler. He knew how his father had perpetrated acts of barbaric cruelty on the Muslims, in order to subdue them. He wanted to atone for them, and especially pacify the Muslims of Medina, so he removed his maternal grandfather, Hisham ibn e Ismael Makhzooni, from the governorship of Medina, and sent his .cousin, Umar ibn e Abdul Aziz in his place

The people of Medina had been praying for relief from Hisham's oppressive rule since he took charge. History has recorded his shameful acts of barbarity. To quote one, Hisham whipped Saeed ibn e Musayyab, the famous and highly respected compiler of Ahadith, ۶۰ times, for refusing to take the oath of loyalty to him and condone his cruel

.actions

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His body was then wrapped in thick, coarse cloth, and thrown out of Medina. The followers of Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a), and especially Imam Ali ibn al Husain, Zain ul Abedin (‘a) were constantly victimized during his governorship.

Umar ibn e Abdul Aziz was famous for his honesty and justice. As soon as he took charge from Hisham, he made an announcement. Hisham was made to stand in front of Marwan ibn e Hakam’s house. The people of Medina were invited to come and avenge the cruelty they had faced at his behest. Group after group arrived; cursed, abused and humiliated him in various ways. The only person Hisham was afraid of was Imam Zain ul Abedin (‘a), and the only group, his (‘a) followers. He knew that his treatment of them deserved nothing less than death. He just hoped that they would not come to avenge their victimization.

The followers of Imam Ali ibn al Husain (‘a) gathered at his house to take him along, so that Hisham could receive his due. However, The Imam (‘a) turned their request down.

‘Killing the already fallen has never been the conduct of the Ahl al Bayt (‘a),’ he said. ‘We do not punish our enemies when they are too weak to defend themselves. On the contrary, we help anyone who is suffering, and try to alleviate his pain, even if he is our worst enemy.’

When Hisham saw the group he dreaded most, approaching, led by the Imam (‘a), he knew his end

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was near, and he started shivering out of fear.

The Imam (‘a) smiled and walked up to him. He greeted him loudly, so that everyone could hear.

Assalam o Alaikum. I have come to offer any help that you might need,' he said,' .embracing him

It was Hisham's turn to die of shame. The people of Medina, taking their lessons in nobility from their Imam ('a), returned home, considering it ignoble to wreak .vengeance on a fallen man

Prosperity and Adversity

The Holy Prophet (s) was sitting in the mosque surrounded by his companions and friends discussing various issues when a poorly dressed person entered the mosque. Knowing the etiquettes of a congregation, he looked around for a vacant place to seat himself. He found one in a corner and sat down. Sitting next to him was a prosperous Arab. As soon as the poor man sat down, he gathered his flowing garments closer, .showing his desire of detaching himself from his neighbour

The Holy Prophet (s) was watching, and, addressing the rich man, asked, 'Were you '?afraid that the shadow of his adversity would fall on you

'.(No, Prophet of Allah (s'

'?Then why did you move away on seeing him sit beside you'

I'm truly ashamed of my act and would wish to pay the penalty for my sinful behavior.' I would like to give half of my wealth to my brother in adversity,' he genuinely .apologized

.But I refuse to accept it,' spoke up the poor man'

.Wherefore?' questioned the gathering, surprised by his response'

I'm afraid'

that prosperity might make me so arrogant that I will treat my brethren-in-adversity .just as he treated me today,' replied the contented and God fearing Muslim

Silent Apology, Silent Acceptance

Anas ibn Maalik was honoured with serving the Holy Prophet (s) and remaining his loyal servant for as long as he (s) lived. He understood his Master's temperament better than all the others who served with him. He was well-acquainted with his simple lifestyle and eating habits. During Ramadhan, he (s) took either milk, a sweet .drink or some curry with his bread for Iftar and Sehr

One evening Anas prepared the bread and placed milk with it at the time of Iftar. However, the Holy Prophet (s) did not return home for quite some time. Having waited for a reasonably long time, Anas presumed he had broken fast with one of his (s) .companions. He, therefore, consumed the food himself

The Holy Prophet (s) returned after some time. Anas took the companion aside and asked him if he (s) had had iftari or not. The companion told him that they had been involved in an important matter and had no time to eat. Anas was nonplussed. It was not possible to prepare anything at this time, and he had consumed his (s) share of .the food himself. His eyes lowered, he could not explain what he had done

The Holy Prophet (s) went to his (s) room while Anas waited, with baited breath outside, to hear him call for food. The Holy Prophet (s) guessed

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why Anas seemed so guilty and apologetic. He (s) went to bed hungry. Never, for as long as he lived, did he (s) ever mention that incident, or make Anas feel bad. Nor did .Anas ever make any presumptions after that incident

Mind Your Language

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) had many followers, some of which stayed with him from the time they rose to the time they went home to sleep. One such person was so attached to the Imam ('a) that people never saw him ever absent himself from his ('a) company, be it at home, in the mosque, in the marketplace, anywhere that the Imam .'('a) went. In spite of having a name, he was generally addressed as 'the friend

One day, he was seen in the marketplace with the Imam (‘a), who wished to get his shoe stitched by the cobbler. ‘The friend’s’ bondsman was following him. As they turned a corner of the street, ‘the friend’ looked back to see if his bondsman was there behind him. He was not there. After a few minutes he turned around to see if he had returned. He was nowhere in sight. Finding him missing for the third time, he .looked back the fourth time and found him standing right behind him

.You bastard! Where were you all this time?’ he shouted‘

The Imam (‘a) was thunderstruck! He (‘a) stopped, aghast. ‘You abused his mother? How dare you accuse her of something as serious as this allegation! All this time I was under the misconception

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that you were a God-fearing believer, but today you have shown me that in reality ’.you do not fear God at all

Ya ibn e RasoolAllah! My slave is a Sindhi, so was his mother. You know they are not ‘ ’.Muslims, so my accusation is not false

His mother might have been a non-believer, but all communities have their own laws‘ of marriage. Those laws are in keeping with their communal system and their union ’.must not be equated with fornication, nor their children considered illegitimate

He then turned his face away from the friend and said, ‘Just remove yourself from my ’.proximity this very minute, and never be seen in my company again

.No one ever saw ‘the friend’ in the company of the Imam (‘a) after this incident

Controlling Anger Wisely

A man of the desert of Arabia visited the Holy Prophet (s) and, after greeting him, made a request. ‘Give me some advice that I should always practice, Prophet of Allah ’.((s

.Control your anger’, he (s) replied, and offered no more‘

The man returned to his tribe. On reaching home, he learnt that, in his absence, the youth of his tribe had plundered the neighbouring tribe and returned with a lot of booty. In response, the young men of that tribe plundered their tribe and absconded. This unruly behaviour continued, so much so, that now both were preparing for a .bloody battle to settle accounts

Hearing this, the man flew into a rage and, donning his armour, prepared to join his .tribe in the fray

On his way

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to the battleground, he was reminded of the advice given to him by the Holy .Prophet(s). He slowed down and thought

What is it that drove me to arm myself for battle? What made me agree to kill and be‘ ’?killed in this bloody way? What is it that made me so furious

This introspection made him conclude, ‘This is the time for me to apply the advice given to me.’ His anger disappeared and he stepped out from within the ranks of his .tribe and calling out to the chief of the opposing tribe, went to him

Speaking softly and courteously, he asked him, ‘What is the reason for this blood-shot anger on both sides? If it is the foolish plundering of your tribe by our youth, I will personally pay for the loss incurred by you. This is no great reason for us to shed ’.blood on both sides

On hearing these words of wisdom, the gallantry of the people of the other tribe was aroused and they immediately retorted, ‘If you can admit your mistake, we, too, can ’.forgive you, for we are certainly not less noble than you

.This ended the bloodthirsty feud, and both sides returned home relieved

Playing Host

Imam Ali ('a) invited a person with his son to dinner. He welcomed him warmly on his arrival and gave him a prominent seat so that he should also feel distinguished among .the respected gathering. Then he ('a) sat beside him

,Dinner was served and everyone enjoyed the meal. After dinner

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Qanbar, the Imam's ('a) well known servant, brought the water, soap and towel with the basin to make the guests wash their hands. Imam Ali ('a) took them from him to .help the new guest wash his hands

The new guest refused to extend his hands and said, 'Is it right that you should help '?wash my hands

Imam Ali ('a) said, 'Your brother-in-faith wishes to serve you so that Almighty Allah rewards him. Do you want him to lose that reward?' said, 'Your brother-in-faith wishes to serve you so that Almighty Allah rewards him. Do you want him to lose that reward?' said, 'Your brother-in-faith wishes to serve you so that Almighty Allah '?rewards him. Do you want him to lose that reward

.The guest could not bring himself to comply with his ('a) request

Finally, Imam Ali ('a) firmly said, 'I sincerely wish to earn the reward of serving a '.brother-in-faith, by Allah, don't deny me the privilege

The guest extended his hands reluctantly. Imam Ali ('a) insisted, 'It will give me great pleasure if you wash your hands as if Qanbar is making you wash them. Don't shy '.away or feel uncomfortable because I'm doing it

As soon as the guest finished washing his hands, Imam Ali ('a) called his son Muhammad Hanafia and said, 'Now help his son wash his hands. I am your father, so I helped his father, you are my son so you help his son. If I had invited the son alone, I would have done the

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needful myself. Allah wishes to distinguish between the respect offered to a father in the presence of his son.’called his son Muhammad Hanafia and said, ‘Now help his son wash his hands. I am your father, so I helped his father, you are my son so you help his son. If I had invited the son alone, I would have done the needful myself. Allah wishes to distinguish between the respect offered to a father in the presence of his son.’called his son Muhammad Hanafia and said, ‘Now help his son wash his hands. I am your father, so I helped his father, you are my son so you help his son. If I had invited the son alone, I would have done the needful myself. Allah wishes to ’.distinguish between the respect offered to a father in the presence of his son

.Muhammad Hanafia did as his father ordered

Imam Hasan Askari (‘a) while narrating the incident, declared: while narrating the :incident, declared: while narrating the incident, declared

’.This is what a true believer should be like‘

Dealing with Lepers

A group of lepers, outcast by society, lived together in Medina. The people repelled them with disgust and hatred because they considered them cursed, not infected, with a disease. They could not quarrel with society so they accepted their humiliation with patience, and cared for one another.A group of lepers, outcast by society, lived together in Medina. The people repelled them with disgust and hatred because they .considered them cursed, not infected, with a disease

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They could not quarrel with society so they accepted their humiliation with patience, and cared for one another.A group of lepers, outcast by society, lived together in Medina. The people repelled them with disgust and hatred because they considered them cursed, not infected, with a disease. They could not quarrel with society so they .accepted their humiliation with patience, and cared for one another

One day they were huddled together around a tablecloth ready to have lunch, when Imam Zain ul Abedin (‘a) passed by. They invited him to share their meal. He apologized, saying that he was fasting. He then extended an invitation to them to be his guests on a certain day of the week. They happily accepted and arrived at the .(residence of the Imam (‘a

He welcomed them very warmly and with great respect seated them around the tablecloth. They saw a feast spread out before them, specially ordered by the Imam (‘a) for them. He then sat with them and ate the food from the same serving dishes on .the tablecloth

Justice

Small becomes Significant

It was an hour before sunset. The caravan was in the middle of a desolate wilderness. The Holy Prophet (s) urged everyone to collect sticks to light a fire. The people murmured apologetically that there was no sign of any tree, bush or shrub in sight. It seemed impossible to find any dried twigs. However, he (s) insisted, ‘Everyone should ’.get as many as he can find

The companions moved in different directions, searching

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for twigs. Even if they spied the smallest twig, they picked it up. Soon, they all returned with whatever they could find and deposited it in a pile. To everyone’s amazement, they had gathered a pile of sticks sufficient to light a fire that would last them the .whole night

The Holy Prophet (s) looked at the pile and said. ‘Our small and insignificant sins are, just like these little twigs, barely noticeable, when scattered over a lifetime, but, just as you gathered them to make this huge pile, there is someone keeping an account of your little sins, too. One day you will be shown your sins piled together, and realize, too late, that what seemed insignificantly small to you then, had actually become

’.increasingly burdensome

Rule with Policies, not Politics

After the third caliph of the Islamic state was murdered, the people flocked towards Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a) in groups with different backgrounds and viewpointts. However, .they all pledged allegiance to Ali (‘a) voluntarily, of their own free will

The next day, Imam Ali (‘a) addressed the people from the pulpit. It was his inaugural address. He began by praising and glorifying the Almighty (SWT) and sending :blessings on the Holy Prophet (s). He then said

O People! After the death of the Holy Prophet (s) the people of that time selected Abu“ Bakr as their caliph. He nominated Umar as his successor. Umar made a committee that would select the next caliph. It selected Usman. You were unhappy with his performance and, finally

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he was besieged in his own house and killed. After that, you turned towards me and .willingly offered your allegiance without being asked to do so

I am one of you and a human being like you. What is for you, is for me, too. Our responsibilities are also similar. God has opened this door between you and all the Muslims. Discord is threatening us like the darkness of night. Only that person can shoulder the responsibility of governing a state that is strong and steadfast, insightful and wise. I intend to take you back to the conduct and practice of the Holy Prophet (s). I promise to fulfill my pledge with you, on the condition that you also remain firm and steadfast on yours. We will certainly need to pray to Allah for His help and support regarding this capacity to fulfill our pledges. I want to remind you that I am exactly the .(same today as I was in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (s

Lead your life according to the principles and rules by ensuring obedience and submission to them. If you observe something strange and unacceptable in my behaviour, do not defy or rebel against it without prior thought. I never do anything

beyond my responsibility, for which I have no rational proof to offer in the presence of God. He is watching each one of us, encompassing all our actions. I am not interested in the position of caliph because I heard the Holy Prophet

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say, 'Whoever takes control of governing the Ummah after me, will be stopped, on the day of Judgment, on the Bridge of Righteousness.

His Document of deeds will be presented to him. If his actions bespeak of justice and fair play, God will grant him salvation because of His justice. If his actions bespeak injustice and tyranny, the bridge will quake and drop him into the fire beneath.'

You have unanimously elected me for this position and I do not have a credible reason or excuse to reject your request. I, therefore, accept this responsibility. Now, hear me carefully!

I, hereby, proclaim to obstruct the path of those individuals that have abused public funds and the state treasury to make large estates, dig many streams flowing with water; that own the best breed of horses, purchase concubines, and have adopted a lifestyle of worldly pleasures. This accountability will begin tomorrow. Whatever is their legal right will remain with them, everything beyond that will return to the state treasury. They might complain tomorrow that they were not forewarned, that Ali ibn e Abi Talib had kept them in the dark.

I, therefore, proclaim in plain terms that I shall end all special privileges enjoyed heretofore. This includes all those individuals who were getting V.I.P. treatment just because they enjoyed the society of the Holy Prophet (s), or served the cause of Islam in the past. Those blessed with the companionship of the Holy Prophet (s) and those who served Islam in the past,

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will get their reward from their Creator. They will not receive special treatment because of their past life and performance. We shall not distinguish them from the

present citizens of the state. Any individual who supports our call for truth and pursues our direction, he will enjoy the same privileges enjoyed today by those who .(accepted the call of the Holy Prophet (s

All of you are the slaves of God and since all property belongs to Allah, its equal distribution amongst you is obligatory. No one among you has an edge over another. ".Tomorrow, all the money in the State treasury will be divided equally among you

The next day, all the people gathered in the courtyard of the mosque. Imam Ali (‘a) divided the money equally among the people. Each individual received ۳ dinars. One person remarked, ‘Ya Ali, you gave me ۳ dinars and ۳ dinars to one, who, until ’.yesterday, was my slave

’.Ali (‘a) replied, ‘I have just done what is right

Talha and Zubayr, Abdullah ibn e Umar, S’aeed ibn e ‘Aas, Marwan ibn e Hakam and their compatriots who had been enjoying special privileges and enhanced allowances from the state treasury, were extremely annoyed in being equated with everyone. They refused the equal share and left the mosque. The next day, the people gathered in the mosque. This group also came, but sat in a separate corner, to maintain their distance from the others. They started sharing their views about the situation, and after a brief

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discussion sent Walid ibn e ‘Uqba as their spokesperson to Ali (‘a). Walid came to ;Imam Ali (‘a) and presented his case thus

Ya Abul Hasan! You are well aware that, due to the wars fought between Islam and ‘ polytheism, we are not happy with you. You killed at least one or more of our dear ones. In the battle of Badr, you killed my own father. However, we are willing to forget .the past and pledge allegiance to you, but under two conditions

First: Repeal your proclamation of yesterday. Do not delve into the affairs of the past, nor question the means by which people amassed wealth during the reign of the

previous two caliphs. Your duty is only to ensure that nobody amasses wealth by .unfair means during your caliphate

Second: Capture the assassins of Usman and hand them over to us, so that we can avenge his murder. If we are not assured peace and security by you, we will be forced ’.to go to Syria and join Muawiya

Imam Ali (‘a) replied, ‘You cannot place the blame on my shoulders for the blood of those killed by my sword in the battles fought between Islam and polytheism. They were not personal feuds, but wars fought between Truth and Falsehood. Present any demands that you have, in this case, on behalf of Falsehood against Truth, not against .me

As for the rights that were trampled upon in the past caliphates, let me make it clear to you; it

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is my principled duty to return all stolen rights to their owners, and it is not possible for .me to neglect my duty

Lastly, if I had found the murderers of Usman, I would have avenged his murder by ’.now and not allowed his murderers reprieve for a single day

Hearing the Imam’s (‘a) reply, Walid got up and returned to his group and related the entire conversation to them. It didn’t take them long to realize that Ali (‘a) believed in implementing accountable and just policies, not paddling in power- politics- without-.principles. They began to create discord immediately for their personal ends

Some well-wishers of Imam Ali (‘a) came to him and said, ‘Ya Ali, These people are going to use Usman’s murder merely as an excuse to create discord. Actually, they are annoyed by your declaration of equal rights as citizens for the past and present generation, for Arab and non-Arab alike. If you retain their past status and ’.compromise your decision, the discord will end

Imam Ali (‘a) realized that most supporters would question his principled stand on equal rights, so next day he dressed himself in the two pieces of cloth, worn as ahram by Hajjis, slung his sword in his neck, and went to the mosque. Resting his hand on his :bow, he addressed the people thus

We thank our Lord for granting us uncountable visible and concealed blessings.‘ These blessings are a result of His Grace and Mercy. He did not withhold these blessings considering we did

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.not deserve them, but bestowed them to see whether we are grateful or thankless

In the eyes of the Lord, only he is better than others who obeys Him, follows in the footsteps of His Messenger (s), and safeguards and recites His Holy Book. For us, an individual’s worth depends on how much he obeys the commands of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (s). For us no individual is better than others, unless he also obeys God (SWT) and His Messenger (s) more than the others. The Holy Quran is among you, and ’.(you are well acquainted with the practice of the Holy Prophet (s

:He, then recited the famous verse of the Holy Quran

O mankind, We created you from a single man and woman, and then divided you into tribes and nations, so that you could be identified. He is the best in Allah’s sight, who is .the most pious among you

After this sermon, friend and foe realized that Ali (‘a) was determined to implement his decision. Each man knew where he stood. He who wished to be loyal, remained loyal; he who disagreed with his decision alienated himself, like Abdullah ibn e Umar; he who decided to rebel, like Talha, Zubayr and Marwan, prepared to take up arms .against him

Ideal Justice

During his caliphate, Imam Ali (‘a) happened to lose his coat of mail in Kufa. After a

few days, he saw it in the possession of a Christian. He accosted him and told him the coat of mail was

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his. The Christian denied it, so Imam Ali ('a) took him to court and filed a suit against .him, saying he had not sold it, nor gifted it

The judge called them and addressing the Christian, said, 'The Caliph has filed a suit '?against you concerning this coat of mail. Have you anything to say in your defense

The Christian said, 'This coat of mail is my personal property. I do not mean to say '.that the Caliph is lying. I feel he is mistaken in identifying it

The judge then addressed Ali ('a) and said, 'You are the complainant and this man denies your charge. It therefore rests on you to produce a witness to testify on your .behalf

Imam Ali ('a) smiled and said, 'You are right. I need evidence to prove my right. '.Unfortunately, I do not have a witness to testify on my behalf

The judge gave his verdict in favour of the Christian due to the absence of any witness. Hearing the verdict, the Christian walked away with the coat of mail. He knew it belonged to Ali ('a), the reigning Caliph. He was overwhelmed with the independence of judiciary under his rule, and returned to the judge and admitted that .the coat of mail was not his

This administering of justice is not the usual customary form prevalent in all other' states. It reminds one of justice meted out during the reigns of the Divine Prophets .('a),' he averred

.After a few days, people saw him convert to Islam

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He actively participated in the Battle of Nehrawan under the banner of the caliph he

.(so admired, Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a

Understanding Justice

The plaintiff registered his complaint against Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a) in the court of the ruling Caliph Umar ibn e Khattab. As per rules, both parties had to be present for the proceedings to take place. Umar sat in the caliph’s chair and called both parties inside. According to Islamic routine, both parties sat next to each other, so that there be no .sign of discriminatory behavior on the part of the court

Umar called the plaintiff by name and told him to stand before the judge. After that he .’looked at Imam Ali (‘a) and said, ‘Abul Hassan, please stand beside the plaintiff

Ali (‘a) looked upset and annoyed when addressed thus. Noticing the obvious change in Ali’s (‘a) countenance, Umar remarked, ‘Ali, do you find standing beside the plaintiff ’?annoying

No! The cause of my displeasure was the fact that you did not comply with the Islamic‘ code of behaviour in court. You called me with great respect by my Kuniya, (title of respect), whereas you addressed the plaintiff curtly, by name. This is unfair and .(discriminatory, thus, annoying,’ replied Ali (‘a

Sense of Responsibility

Ameer ul Momineen, Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a) was the ruling Caliph of the Islamic State. His headquarters were in Kufa. His brother, Aqeel, came to visit him. Hazrat Ali (‘a) gestured to his eldest son, Hassan (‘a), to present a suit

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.of clothes to his uncle. Imam Hassan (‘a) offered him his own cape with the suit

Night fell. As it was the summer season, they sat talking on the rooftop of the Dar ul Ammara, the head quarter’s office building. Soon it was dinnertime. Aqeel thought that he would enjoy delicacies of all kinds, considering it the Caliph’s feast. To his utter disappointment, the food served was not different from that of an ordinary citizen of

.the state

.Is that all?’ he asked‘

’.Why, is it not food? I thank the Lord for His countless blessings all the time‘

I think it would be best if I got my need fulfilled and left as soon as possible. I am in‘ great debt and want you to order its immediate payment through the Bait ul Maal (State Treasury). Besides that, you can help me, as a brother, to relieve me of my ’.financial burden, so that I can return home in peace

’?What is the amount of your debt‘

’.One hundred thousand dirhams‘

One hundred thousand dirhams! That is a large sum, brother. You will have to wait for‘ the end of the month. As soon as I get my pay, I shall give my portion to you as a brother’s right over me. Since I need to provide for my family, I cannot give you the ’.entire amount

What do you mean by waiting for your salary? Why are you talking like this? The‘ whole wealth of the nation is in your hands and you talk about

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waiting for your salary? What is the amount of your salary, of which you will give me a ’.portion? Even if you give me your entire salary, my need will not be satisfied

I am surprised by your suggestion. What does the money in the treasury have to do‘ with you or me? We are all citizens of the state with equal rights. You are justified in asking me to help you as your brother, but that help must be provided from my ’.private, personal means, not the state treasury

The argument continued, because Aqeel insisted on getting his debts paid through the Bait ul Maal. Ali (‘a) tried explaining to him but just could not convince him. So, he said,

Look down there. Can you see the marketplace? All the small traders have left their‘ cash boxes on the counters. I can offer a suggestion that will pay your debts and ’.leave you with money to spare

’?What is that suggestion‘

There is no one in the marketplace. Go down there, break open all the cash boxes of‘ the tradesmen and take as much money as you need. It is the hard-earned money of the small businessmen. They have left their earnings in those cash boxes and gone ’.home

What a strange suggestion! You want me to break open the cash boxes of the poor,‘ hardworking people who have left their lawful earnings in the protection of Allah and ’?gone home, and abscond with their money

Why then are you insisting that I should open‘

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the Bait ul Maal and give you the money that you need? To whom does the Bait ul Maal belong? It belongs to all the Muslims who have entrusted me with it and are sleeping soundly in their homes. You know very well that it is not my personal property. Just as criminal, as you found breaking peoples cash boxes, is opening the .door of the treasury

O.K. I have another suggestion. Pick up your sword. I’ll take mine as well. Let us go to Heerah, the city that is home to rich traders and businessmen. In the darkness of the ’.night we will break into the house of a rich man and abscond with his wealth

Dear Ali, I didn’t come to be advised to rob and steal the wealth of others as you are‘ suggesting. I came to request you to pay my debts out of the state treasury which is ’.in your control

Is stealing from one man a smaller crime or stealing from all the Muslims? I fail to‘ understand how robbing a man by using the sword is considered theft, yet taking

away from the state treasury of all the Muslims is not? You are surprised and annoyed by my suggestion of robbing and stealing, but, sadly, do not realize that you expect ’.me to commit the worst of all kinds of theft

Duty of a Caliph

A woman, bearing a water bag on her back, was trudging home gasping under the .load

A stranger, catching sight of her, came, relieved her of

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the burden, and followed her home. At the door, he saw some small children eagerly .waiting for their mother. One glance told him that she lived alone with her children

The stranger placed the bag on the ground and said, ‘It is obvious that there is no ?man in the house. What is the reason for your helpless condition

My husband was a brave soldier. Ali ibn e Abi Talib sent him to fight in a battle and he‘ ’.was martyred. I have no one to support me and my children anymore

The stranger went away without saying anything. However, the condition of the widow and the orphans bothered him, and he couldn’t sleep all night. Early next morning, he got up, filled a bag with flour, another with meat, and a third with dates. .He carried it to the widow’s house and knocked at the door

.Who’s there?’ asked the voice of the woman‘

The stranger who helped you yesterday,’ he replied, ‘I have brought some food and‘ ’.water for your children

O man of God, may He reward you. He Alone will judge between us and Ali ibn e Abi‘ ’.Talib

She opened the door and the stranger placed the bags on the ground. He said, ‘I want to perform some good deeds, so if you permit me I will prepare the dough and make

’?the bread or look after the children while you do it

’.I’ll prepare the bread. You look after the children‘

The woman got busy, so the stranger took out the

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meat and dates and started feeding the children with his own hands. While feeding the children, he kept on repeating, ‘Dear children, forgive Ali ibn e Abi Talib for not ’.attending to your needs as he should have

’.The woman called out, ‘O man of God, light the oven so that I can bake the bread

He immediately lit the oven and it started blazing. He put his face near the fire and spoke to himself, ‘Feel the heat of the flames. For he, who neglects widows and ’.orphans, will be made to taste the fire

He was still meditating when a neighbor walked in. She recognized the stranger and cried, ‘Do you know who you are asking to do your chores? It is Ameer ul Momineen, ’.(Ali ibn e Abi Talib (‘a

’.Forgive me,’ the widow cried, ‘I am really sorry for complaining, as I did‘

No,’ he (‘a) replied, ‘I should beg forgiveness for not performing my duty as I should‘ ’.have

Slightest Inclination

Imam Ali (‘a) was hosting a guest for the past many days. The guest had an ulterior motive which he did not reveal until the time was ripe for it. He was actually waiting for the other party to appear so that he could talk about it then. Finding it difficult to restrain himself, one day, he informed Imam Ali (‘a) about the dispute he was .engaged in, and that he (‘a) would judge between them

Imam Ali (‘a) asked him, ‘Are you a member of one of the registered disputing

parties?'

'Yes.'

'Then I'm extremely sorry. I cannot keep you as a guest in my house from this moment onwards, because the Holy Prophet (s) said:

"If a judge is presented with a case, he has no right to play host to one party while the other party is not there. Both parties should be treated with the same hospitality, without showing the slightest inclination towards any one of them."'

Human Rights

Dealing with Unprovoked Annoyance

One day a man came to the Holy Prophet (s) seeking advice on how to deal with his neighbour's unprovoked annoying behaviour. He (s) said, 'Be patient and do not raise any hue and cry. Besides, try changing your own attitude towards him.'

A few days later the man returned more exasperated than before. He (s) repeated, 'Be patient.'

The third time the man came, he was at the end of his rope. He said, 'I'm sorry, but I can't take anymore. He is pestering me and my family beyond measure.'

The Holy Prophet (s) then advised him, 'Today is Friday. Go home and place your household baggage on the main street where people can see it. When they ask you the reason tell them that your neighbour's behaviour is unbearable. Thus, everyone will learn about your complaint.'

The man followed the Holy Prophet's (s) advice to the letter. His neighbor was under the impression that he would continue bearing his excesses, not realizing that Islam preaches forbearance to a certain limit. Once that limit is crossed, the oppressor has to face the consequences. Transgressors

.do not deserve anyone's respect

As soon as he learnt that his neighbour had decided to place his excesses into the people's court, and was apprising them of his behaviour, he got unnerved, and begging forgiveness, requested him to take his baggage back to his house. He promised never to bother him again, and maintain good neighbourly relations with .him

Protecting Ones Rights

Samra ibn e Jundab planted a date-palm in the orchard of an Ansar (Medinite). The domestic lodgings of the owner were within the precincts of his orchard. Samra was .granted the right to enter the orchard to water his tree or pick fruit when ripe

However, Samra abused the right granted by Islamic law. He entered the orchard nonchalantly, in fact, irresponsibly, without announcing himself. In the domestic quarters of the owner, his family members were busy in their chores, sometimes not .dressed for strangers' eyes

The owner requested him to observe the rules of Islamic etiquette and enter after gaining permission from his family members. Samra blatantly refused to comply with his request and walked in without announcing himself. He also eyed whatever he saw, .not lowering his gaze as commanded by Almighty Allah

Exasperated with his behaviour, the owner complained to the Holy Prophet (s) about .him, requesting him to advise Samra

The Holy Prophet (s) called for him and said, 'There is a complaint lodged by the owner of the orchard against you. He is annoyed by your indecent behaviour. You ,enter his orchard unannounced and eye his women

who don't get a chance to go indoors. You are advised to enter only after getting

permission from his family from this day onward.' Samra refused to comply with his .(s) directive

The Holy Prophet (s) offered another alternative. He (s) suggested he sell his tree. He refused outright. He (s) raised the price of the tree. He still refused. He (s) promised a .tree in heaven for this one. He rejected every offer

The Holy Prophet (s) then gave his verdict on the situation. 'You are a stubborn

and sadistic person. Islam does not permit anyone to harass or harm anyone.' He ordered the owner of the orchard to cut down Samra's tree and throw it in the street. .The people went and did as directed

The Holy Prophet (s) looked at Samra and said, 'Go hence, and use the tree in the '.open fields you see around

Honouring the Caliph

The people of Anbar, Iran, were overjoyed to learn that their beloved Caliph Ali ibn e Abi Talib, Ameer ul Momineen ('a) would be passing through their town on his way to Kufa. At the appointed time, they all gathered on the sides of the highway that led to .Kufa and waited to catch a glimpse of him

Soon, they caught sight of their Caliph entering their town. They all started to run in front of his entourage. Imam Ali ('a) stopped and asked those people why they were .all running, and what purpose it was serving

They explained, 'This is our conventional way of honouring our popular

leaders and honourable personalities, as well as the rich and powerful. It is an old .custom of our region

Imam Ali ('a) shook his head with disapproval and said, 'O people! Your act does not trouble you in this world alone, but will also create problems in the next. Never abase

yourself before anyone in this manner. Think for a moment: How will this ’?obsequiousness on your part benefit your master or leader, positively

Duties of a Neighbour

A Medinite (Ansar), once moved into a new house, only to find his neighbor to be a .very unpleasant person

He went to the Holy Prophet (s) and presented his problem, ‘I have moved into a new locality and found myself living in close quarters with so-and-so. I am sorry to complain but my neighbour is not only an unpleasant person but also ill-intentioned and quarrelsome. I am afraid I will not be able to save myself from his dangerous and .damaging intentions

The Holy Prophet (s) immediately called Imam Ali (‘a), Salman, Abu Dharr and Miqdad (May Allah be pleased with them). He deputed all four to go to the mosque and convey .the message to all the men and women present there

The message: Any person found guilty of discourteous behaviour or bad conduct that .annoyed or upset his neighbour would not be considered a believer

The Holy Prophet (s) then entered the mosque, and moving his arms in all four directions, said ‘People occupying forty houses on each side of your house are

’.your neighbours

Basic Needs

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq was travelling between Mecca and Medina. Musadaf, his famous serving man, was accompanying him on this journey. On the way, they sighted a man lying under a tree. He seemed in bad shape from a distance. The Imam (‘a) said to Musadaf, ‘Let us go and see what’s wrong with him. It is possible that he has fainted because of thirst and dehydration.’ said to Musadaf, ‘Let us go and see what’s wrong with him. It is possible that he has fainted because of thirst and dehydration.’ said to

Musadaf, ‘Let us go and see what’s wrong with him. It is possible that he has fainted ’.because of thirst and dehydration

When they reached him, they found him conscious. The Imam (‘a) asked, ‘Are you ’?thirsty

.Yes,’ he replied.‘Yes,’ he replied.‘Yes,’ he replied‘

The Imam (‘a) ordered Musadaf to slake his thirst. He got off his horse and gave the thirsty man enough water to satisfy his thirst. He noticed from his appearance and dress that he was not a Muslim, but a Christian. ordered Musadaf to slake his thirst. He got off his horse and gave the thirsty man enough water to satisfy his thirst. He noticed from his appearance and dress that he was not a Muslim, but a Christian. ordered Musadaf to slake his thirst. He got off his horse and gave the thirsty man enough water to satisfy his thirst. He noticed from his appearance and dress that he was not a Muslim, but

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.a Christian

They resumed their journey. Musadaf asked the Imam (‘a), ‘Can we give alms to ’?Christians?’, ‘Can we give alms to Christians?’, ‘Can we give alms to Christians

Yes, especially when they are in need, as just now.’‘Yes, especially when they are in ‘ ’.need, as just now.’‘Yes, especially when they are in need, as just now

Social Security

One day Imam Ali (‘a) was passing by a street when his eye fell on a blind old man begging for alms. He was extremely disturbed by his condition and asked the people if he had no family to support him. On investigating, he found that he was a Christian by faith, and had earned his living through hard labour until he lost his eyesight because of age. He was on his own and had no one to care for him. He had also not saved any .money because of meager earnings

,When confirmed that he had never begged while he could earn, Imam Ali (‘a) said

It is amazing how you people use a human being for as long as he can serve you and‘ discard him after he cannot. You all testify that he served society as long as he could see. It is, therefore, the duty of the society and government to ensure him a decent life, now that he cannot fend for himself. I hereby institute a regular allowance to be ’.paid to him from the State Treasury for as long as he lives

Three Duties

Abdul A’ala ibn e A’in of Kufa was

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preparing to go to Medina to visit Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a). The followers of the Ahl al Bayt (‘a) thought it was a good opportunity to get answers to the questions that cropped up every now and then, and confused them. They all wrote down their questions and handed them to him. However, they added, ‘Ask Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) to let us know orally, what the duties of a Muslim are towards his Muslim ’.brethren

Ibn e A’in reached Medina and went straight to the Imam (‘a). After the initial courtesies were over, he presented the written questions to him and added the one asked orally by the people of Kufa. The Imam answered all the questions but did not respond to the oral one.. After the initial courtesies were over, he presented the written questions to him and added the one asked orally by the people of Kufa. The Imam answered all the questions but did not respond to the oral one.. After the initial courtesies were over, he presented the written questions to him and added the one asked orally by the people of Kufa. The Imam answered all the questions but did not .respond to the oral one

Many days passed, but no one referred to the question that remained unanswered. Finally Ibn e A’in decided to return home, so he came to bid the Imam (‘a) farewell. Before leaving, he said, ‘Ya ibn e Rasool Allah, I have received all the answers but one. Now that

I’m leaving, I’d be grateful if you gave me the answer to that one, so that I might be ’.able to satisfy the thirst for knowledge of those who asked it

...(I intentionally avoided answering it,’ replied the Imam (‘a‘

’?Why, I beg of you?’‘Why, I beg of you?’‘Why, I beg of you‘

Because if I tell you and you do not act according to the information you receive, you‘ will be excommunicated from Islam.’‘Because if I tell you and you do not act according to the information you receive, you will be excommunicated from Islam.’‘Because if I tell you and you do not act according to the information you ’.receive, you will be excommunicated from Islam

He then informed him of three basic duties of a Muslim towards his brethren-in-faith.He then informed him of three basic duties of a Muslim towards his brethren-in-faith.He then informed him of three basic duties of a Muslim towards his brethren-in-.faith

Remember, these three divine commands and never treat them lightly:‘Remember,‘ these three divine commands and never treat them lightly:‘Remember, these three :divine commands and never treat them lightly

Firstly, be just in all affairs among yourselves and treat one other as you would like to be treated yourself by others.Firstly, be just in all affairs among yourselves and treat one other as you would like to be treated yourself by others.Firstly, be just in all affairs among yourselves and treat one other as you would like to be treated yourself .by others

Secondly, never think twice about helping your

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brother-in need with your resources; do it at once, lest your self-interest intervenes.Secondly, never think twice about helping your brother-in need with your

resources; do it at once, lest your self-interest intervenes.Secondly, never think twice about helping your brother-in need with your resources; do it at once, lest your self-interest intervenes.

Lastly, following the above two will become easy if you always remember the Lord under all circumstances. This does not mean repeating Alhamdolillah, Subhan Allah all the time on the rosary. It means a constant awareness of His presence, which prevents you from committing a forbidden act. Society would face fewer problems if everyone was convinced that he was being watched.'Lastly, following the above two will become easy if you always remember the Lord under all circumstances. This does not mean repeating Alhamdolillah, Subhan Allah all the time on the rosary. It means a constant awareness of His presence, which prevents you from committing a forbidden act. Society would face fewer problems if everyone was convinced that he was being watched.'Lastly, following the above two will become easy if you always remember the Lord under all circumstances. This does not mean repeating Alhamdolillah, Subhan Allah all the time on the rosary. It means a constant awareness of His presence, which prevents you from committing a forbidden act. Society would face fewer problems if everyone was convinced that he was being watched.'

Rights of a Mother

Zakaria ibn e Ibrahim of Kufa, was born to Christian parents. When he grew young, he was exposed to Islam,

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and was very strongly attracted by it. Islam seemed to stir his soul and urge him to accept it as his faith. Finally, one day, against the approval of his family, he declared his conversion to Islam. Thenceforth, he observed the Islamic code of law and practiced it dutifully.

Soon it was time to perform Hajj. He left Kufa and went straight to Medina to meet Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a). He related his entire experience of being a Christian and then converting to Islam. The Imam ('a) asked him, 'What was it about Islam that

attracted you the most?' asked him, 'What was it about Islam that attracted you the ’?most?' asked him, 'What was it about Islam that attracted you the most

All I can say is that Verse ٥٢ of Surah Shura in the Holy Quran seems to describe my‘ ,situation perfectly. The Almighty addresses His Messenger (s) saying, saying, saying

You were unaware of the Book and the Faith. We revealed it to you through…“ ”…Inspiration and made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants

The Imam ('a) said, 'I testify that Almighty Allah has guided you towards the path of Truth.' The Imam then repeated this prayer three times, 'O Sustainer of all creation, ’!May You always be his guide

Then he ('a) said, 'Do you need to ask any questions, young man?' said, 'Do you need to ask any questions, young man?' said, 'Do you need to ask any questions, young ’?man

I certainly‘

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do. My parents and the entire family are Christians and I am a Muslim. My mother is blind. I live with them and am obliged to eat with them. What am I supposed to do under the circumstances?"'I certainly do. My parents and the entire family are Christians and I am a Muslim. My mother is blind. I live with them and am obliged to eat with them. What am I supposed to do under the circumstances?"'I certainly do. My parents and the entire family are Christians and I am a Muslim. My mother is blind. I live with them and am obliged to eat with them. What am I supposed to do under the ’?circumstances

’?Does your family eat pork?"'Does your family eat pork?"'Does your family eat pork‘

No, Ya ibn e Rasool Allah, they do not even touch the meat of swine.''No, Ya ibn e ‘ Rasool Allah, they do not even touch the meat of swine.''No, Ya ibn e Rasool Allah, ’.they do not even touch the meat of swine

Then there is no objection in living and eating with them. Remember one thing. Do' not be lax in serving your mother. Be kind and affectionate to her until she is alive, and after her death do not assign the task of burying her to others. Perform all the funeral rites yourself. Now I take my leave. Do not mention your meeting with me to anybody here. I am also going to Mina, and Insha Allah, hope to see you there.''Then

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there is no objection in living and eating with them. Remember one thing. Do not be lax in serving your mother. Be kind and affectionate to her until she is alive, and after her death do not assign the task of burying her to others. Perform all the funeral rites yourself. Now I take my leave. Do not mention your meeting with me to anybody here. I am also going to Mina, and Insha Allah, hope to see you there.''Then there is no objection in living and eating with them. Remember one thing. Do not be lax in serving your mother. Be kind and affectionate to her until she is alive, and after her death do not assign the task of burying her to others. Perform all the funeral rites yourself. Now I take my leave. Do not mention your meeting with me to anybody here. I am also going to Mina, and Insha Allah, hope to see you there.'

All the Hajjis gathered in Mina. Zakaria frantically looked for the Imam ('a). Finally, he saw him ('a) surrounded by hordes of Hajjis who were questioning him like children seeking advice from their teacher. Those standing behind him ('a) would question from afar and get their answer. would question from afar and get their answer. would question from afar and get their answer.

After performing Hajj, Zakaria returned to Kufa. He remembered the Imam's ('a) advice concerning his mother, and started looking after her with great care and love. He fed her

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with his own hands, washed her clothes and combed her hair. His mother couldn't help noticing the difference in his attitude.

One day she asked him, ‘Son, when we all professed the same religion, you did not behave in the same affectionate manner as you do now, after becoming a Muslim. What has brought about this visible change in you?’One day she asked him, ‘Son, when we all professed the same religion, you did not behave in the same affectionate manner as you do now, after becoming a Muslim. What has brought about this visible change in you?’One day she asked him, ‘Son, when we all professed the same religion, you did not behave in the same affectionate manner as you do now, after ’?becoming a Muslim. What has brought about this visible change in you

Dear Mother! A member of the offspring of the Holy Prophet (s) ordered me to do it.’‘ ’.ordered me to do it.’ ordered me to do it

’?Is he a prophet?’‘Is he a prophet?’‘Is he a prophet‘

’.’.’.(No. He is a son of the Prophet (s‘

My son, I feel he is also a prophet, because such advice is not given by others.’‘My‘ son, I feel he is also a prophet, because such advice is not given by others.’‘My son, I ’.feel he is also a prophet, because such advice is not given by others

No Mother, he is not a prophet, because, according to our faith, the Holy Prophet (s) is‘ the last prophet sent by God on

earth. There will be no prophet after him.’ is the last prophet sent by God on earth. There will be no prophet after him.’ is the last prophet sent by God on earth. There will ’.be no prophet after him

My son, your faith is better than all the faiths I know of. Teach me your faith. I want to‘ ’.accept it

The son read the (shahadah) statement testifying the Oneness of Allah and the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (s). His mother repeated it after him and became a Muslim. After that, he taught her how to perform wuzu and offer the obligatory

prayers. She offered the afternoon (zuhr) and evening prayers (asr) and then the .after-sunset (maghrib) and early-night ('isha) prayers

After midnight, her condition suddenly deteriorated and she asked her son to repeat the statement and principles of Islam, which he had taught her that day. She repeated .the statement after him and her soul flew out of her body to meet its Creator

In the morning, the Muslim women came, bathed her body and wrapped it in the coffin cloth. The person, who led her funeral prayer and interred her into the grave, was none other than her son, Zakaria.In the morning, the Muslim women came, bathed her body and wrapped it in the coffin cloth. The person, who led her funeral prayer and interred her into the grave, was none other than her son, Zakaria.In the morning, the Muslim women came, bathed her body and wrapped it in

the coffin cloth. The person, who led her funeral prayer and interred her into the .grave, was none other than her son, Zakaria

The Enemy is Also Human

Muawiya was ruling over Syria, as governor, sixteen years before Imam Ali ('a) was forced by the people to accept the reigns of governing the Islamic State as caliph. He had entrenched himself firmly and raised an army to oppose Ali's ('a) leadership. After the battle of Jamal, he declared independence from the Islamic State and began concocting evidence for himself as caliph. Imam Ali ('a) was dragged into another .conflict, with the intention of destabilizing his ('a) rule.rule.rule

Maalik e Ashter Nikhaee was the commander of the Muslims, while Muawiya's army was led by Abul A'ur Salma. The armies stood, facing one another, on the bank of the .Euphrates

Muawiya's troops attacked Imam Ali's ('a) army without forewarning and captured that corner of the river, called 'Sharia', from which both sides took water for drinking purposes. They, then, announced that Ali's ('a) army would not be allowed,

henceforth, to collect water to drink. Meanwhile, Muawiya arrived with more soldiers and encouraged them to control the water and try to weaken the opposing side by cutting off their water supply. Maalik e Ashter did not have permission to raise arms ...(without permission from the Imam ('a

Imam Ali ('a) as usual, wrote to Muawiya to avoid bloodshed and solve differences on the table through talks. He ('a) sent his notable companion, S'as'ah, with a message. It ran thus: sent his

notable companion, S'as'ah, with a message. It ran thus: sent his notable companion, :S'as'ah, with a message. It ran thus

Our armies are facing each other, but it is our wish to avoid the unnecessary' bloodshed of Muslims through battle. I seek to settle differences through talks, but you and your commanders have opted to use arms first. Besides, they have cut off our water supply. Order them to stop this inhuman behaviour. However, if you are intent on fighting, then, remember, your opponent is a fearless warrior.''Our armies are facing each other, but it is our wish to avoid the unnecessary bloodshed of Muslims through battle. I seek to settle differences through talks, but you and your commanders have opted to use arms first. Besides, they have cut off our water supply. Order them to stop this inhuman behaviour. However, if you are intent on fighting, then, remember, your opponent is a fearless warrior.''Our armies are facing each other, but it is our wish to avoid the unnecessary bloodshed of Muslims through battle. I seek to settle differences through talks, but you and your commanders have opted to use arms first. Besides, they have cut off our water supply. Order them to stop this inhuman behaviour. However, if you are intent on fighting, then, remember, '.your opponent is a fearless warrior

Muawiya showed the letter to his advisors. Everyone opted for war except for Umro .ibn e Aas, the most shrewd among them

He said 'Water or no water, Ali will defeat

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’.us outright

Muawiya thought the lack of water would weaken Ali’s soldiers, so he did not respond to the invitation to talk over the table. When Sa’s’ah requested a response to the letter, Muawiya said he would reply later, so he returned.

Imam Ali (‘a) realizing the evil intentions of Muawiya, which were further enhanced by his renewed orders to ensure that water did not reach Ali’s men, came to the battleground and addressed the army thus:realizing the evil intentions of Muawiya, which were further enhanced by his renewed orders to ensure that water did not reach Ali’s men, came to the battleground and addressed the army thus:realizing the evil intentions of Muawiya, which were further enhanced by his renewed orders to ensure that water did not reach Ali’s men, came to the battleground and addressed the army thus:

‘The opposing army has transgressed all limits of inhuman behaviour. They have cut off your water supply to let you die of thirst. Their thirst for war is as strong as a starving man’s desire for food. There are only two options before you: either accept humiliation and die of thirst, or quench the thirst of your swords with their impure blood.

Life has no meaning without victory and control, even if the head is severed from the body in the process. A life of humiliation and dishonour is equivalent to death. Let me inform you that Muawiya has gathered an army of contemptible, deviating individuals, whose folly and ignorance he has taken

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advantage of, and prepared those unfortunate ones to lay down their lives for him.’Life has no meaning without victory and control, even if the head is severed from the body in the process. A life of humiliation and dishonour is equivalent to death. Let me inform you that Muawiya has gathered an army of contemptible, deviating

individuals, whose folly and ignorance he has taken advantage of, and prepared those unfortunate ones to lay down their lives for him.'Life has no meaning without victory and control, even if the head is severed from the body in the process. A life of humiliation and dishonour is equivalent to death. Let me inform you that Muawiya has gathered an army of contemptible, deviating individuals, whose folly and ignorance he has taken advantage of, and prepared those unfortunate ones to lay down their lives '.for him

Ali's ('a) army fought valiantly to regain their basic right and drove the army, .controlling Shari'a, miles away from the waterfront in no time

Umro ibn e Aas poked fun at Muawiya, asking him, 'What will you do now, if Ali and his companions treat you as you treated them, and cut off your water? Can you regain '?the lost waterfront

Muawiya replied, smiling knowingly, 'What do you think, will Ali behave like us?' Umro ,said

Ali will never cut off our water to make us suffer the pangs of thirst. His nobility of' character is unquestionable.''Ali will never cut off our water to make us suffer the .pangs of thirst

His nobility of character is unquestionable.''Ali will never cut off our water to make us '.suffer the pangs of thirst. His nobility of character is unquestionable

When Ali ('a) was asked for permission 'to do unto them what they had done to them', he ('a) said: 'We will never stoop as low as the ignorant ones. We will let them take water and invite them to the right path in the best manner possible, as commanded in the Holy Quran. If they respond positively, well and good, but if they don't, we will fight them bravely like men, not like cowards, by cutting off their water supply and making them suffer the pangs of thirst.' said: 'We will never stoop as low as the ignorant ones. We will let them take water and invite them to the right path in the best

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’.the pangs of thirst

Before sunset, two sets of human beings were seen filling water from the river to .drink. One set filled with shame, the other, with dignity

I Divorce You

There were two interpretations of the rules of divorce, maintained by the two main groups of Muslims. One followed the ruling Umayyad or Abbasid class, and the other .(followed the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s

According to the first group, when a man declares, ‘I divorce you’, three times in one go, the two are separated and cannot remarry until the woman marries another man .and is divorced or widowed

The Shi’ah maintain that the three words, ‘I divorce you’ can be repeated ۱۰۰ times in one go and still be considered one divorce. Husband and wife can reunite within a specified term if they wish to. If this incident is repeated, they can still reunite within the specified term. However, if it is repeated a third time they lose their chance of reconciliation. The woman must marry another man, fulfill the duties of a wife, then, if .divorced or widowed, can marry him again

In Kufa there lived a couple, happily married. They quarreled on a minor issue and the man declared ‘I divorce you’ thrice. Both were extremely unhappy after the incident and repented over their act. Those people that believed in the first interpretation

insisted upon their separation. The Shi'ah scholars pacified them and allowed reconciliation. But the wife was afraid that if they united, their future offspring

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might be declared illegitimate. She insisted upon her husband to get a ruling from .Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) himself

The Abbasid ruler had forcefully brought the Imam ('a) from Medina and isolated him in a house in Heerah, a town near Kufa. He was kept under strict surveillance. Nobody .was allowed to meet him

This man disguised himself as a greengrocer and crying, 'Cucumbers, cool, tasty cucumbers,' managed to gain entrance into the house. He then greeted the Imam ('a) and quickly acquainted him with his problem. The Imam ('a) admired his disguise and after learning the reason declared, 'Go back to your wife, for she is legally yours till '.you don't commit this mistake three times

Husband and Wife

Imam Ali ('a), as Caliph, sat beside the outer wall of the Dar ul Ammara in Kufa, in the heat of the afternoon, to be available to anyone who had a problem and wished to see him. One day a woman came to him and complained, 'My husband has beaten me, turned me out of the house, and threatened to kill me. If I return now he will kill me. I have come for help.', as Caliph, sat beside the outer wall of the Dar ul Ammara in Kufa, in the heat of the afternoon, to be available to anyone who had a problem and wished to see him. One day a woman came to him and complained, 'My husband has beaten .me, turned me out of the house, and threatened to kill me

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’.threatened to kill me. If I return now he will kill me. I have come for help

Imam Ali (‘a) told her to wait until it became cooler. He said he would go with her to .speak to her husband and solve her problem

She said, ‘If I return late, he will be further infuriated and get more violent.’She said, ‘If I return late, he will be further infuriated and get more violent.’She said, ‘If I return ’.late, he will be further infuriated and get more violent

,Imam Ali (‘a) bent his head for a moment of introspection. He then raised it, saying

By Allah, there should be no delay in ending the suffering of the oppressed. It is‘ necessary to snatch the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor, and remove the fear of the oppressor from the heart of the oppressed, so that the oppressed can ’.demand his/ her rights from the oppressor without fear

He then accompanied her to her home and stood at the door and said, ‘Peace be upon the residents of this house.’He then accompanied her to her

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home and stood at the door and said, ‘Peace be upon the residents of this house.’He then accompanied her to her home and stood at the door and said, ‘Peace be upon ’.the residents of this house

A young man, who was her husband, emerged from within. He did not recognize Imam Ali (‘a), so he thought his wife had brought a ۶۰ year old to plead on her behalf., so he thought his wife had brought a ۶۰ year old to plead on her behalf., so he thought .his wife had brought a ۶۰ year old to plead on her behalf

Imam Ali (‘a) told him that his wife had complained about his cruel treatment and threats, so he had come to advise him to be tolerant and treat her with kindness. told him that his wife had complained about his cruel treatment and threats, so he had come to advise him to be tolerant and treat her with kindness. told him that his wife had complained about his cruel treatment and threats, so he had come to advise him

.to be tolerant and treat her with kindness

The man flew into a rage and said, ‘She is my wife. I will treat her as I want. Who are you to advise me to be kind to her. Now that she has brought you, I will definitely throw her into the fire alive.’The man flew into a rage and said, ‘She is my wife. I will treat her as I want. Who

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are you to advise me to be kind to her. Now that she has brought you, I will definitely throw her into the fire alive.’The man flew into a rage and said, ‘She is my wife. I will treat her as I want. Who are you to advise me to be kind to her. Now that she has ’.brought you, I will definitely throw her into the fire alive

Imam Ali (‘a) was touched to the quick by the barbaric manner of the young man. He pulled his sword from its sheath and said, ‘I am trying to guide you towards goodness and prevent you from committing evil, but you are responding by threatening to burn her alive. Do you think justice is dead?’you from committing evil, but you are responding by threatening to burn her alive. Do you think justice is dead?’you from committing evil, but you are responding by threatening to burn her alive. Do you think ’?justice is dead

When Imam Ali (‘a) spoke loudly, the passersby heard him and recognized him. They came flocking towards him and greeted him respectfully, ‘Assalam o Alaikum, Ya ’.Ameer ul Momineen

The arrogant young man realized whom he was facing, and came back to his senses. He pleaded, ‘Please forgive me, Ya Ameer ul Momineen, I am truly sorry. I admit my mistake and pledge to live in peace with my wife. I will be kind to her and respect her wishes from this moment onwards.’The arrogant young man realized whom he

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was facing, and came back to his senses. He pleaded, ‘Please forgive me, Ya Ameer ul Momineen, I am truly sorry. I admit my mistake and pledge to live in peace with my

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Imam Ali ('a) turned towards the woman and said, 'Enter your home and be careful not to do anything that forces him to behave in such a manner.'

Financial Matters

Black Marketing

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) had a large family. Obviously, his domestic needs were also proportionately greater. He decided to invest some capital in trade, so he ('a) called his serving man Musaddaf, and handing him ١٠٠٠ dinars, told him to go to Egypt with tradable goods and sell them there. Musaddaf did as told, and joined a caravan of traders going to Egypt.

On their way they met a group coming back from Egypt. They told them that the goods they were carrying to sell were in great demand there, and would fetch them a good price.

On reaching Egypt they found the information they had received to be absolutely correct. They held a meeting and decided they would not sell

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their goods for less than double its price, a ١٠٠٪ profit. They pledged not to let each other down, and refused to supply the needs of their fellow Muslims in Egypt. They emerged successful and sold all they had with double the amount of capital they had invested in stocks.

On his return, Musaddaf triumphantly placed two pouches of dinars before the Imam ('a). The Imam ('a) said, 'What is the meaning of these two?'

He replied, all smiles, ‘One contains your capital, the other your profit. Both amounts ’.are equal

.(What?’ said Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a‘

’.Yes, I mean it. We made a ١٠٠ ٪ profit with your money‘

’.What? You certainly need to explain‘

Well, we learnt that the goods we had bought to trade in Egypt were direly needed by‘ them, so we all joined hands to sell them for double the price. All of us remained united and the people became helpless and paid the amount for what they needed ’.badly

You mean you united together to black market your goods?’ SubhanAllah! You black ‘ market your goods and expect me to enjoy its profit. I’m afraid, I cannot accept such ,money.’ He (‘a) then picked up one pouch of ١٠٠٠ dinars and said

This is my hard earned lawful money. Pick up the other pouch. I refuse to have‘ ’.anything to do with it

He then addressed his serving man thus, ‘Musaddaf! It is much easier to wield the sword than earn lawful money. In other words, earning lawful money is much more difficult

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’.than wielding the sword

Dead Father’s Debts

Mother, dear Mother!’ The woeful cry of a young man was heard in the silence of the‘ .dark night

A caravan was travelling from Medina to an outpost. The Holy Prophet (s), who always followed the caravan to keep an eye on the weak and feeble members on the journey, in case left behind, heard the voice. Reaching the spot, he (s) found this very

.anxious young man, standing atop his camel's back, wailing aloud for help

'?The Holy Prophet (s) asked him, 'What is your name

.Jaber ibn e Abdullah', he replied'

'?Why are you so afraid and anxious'

O Messenger of Allah! My camel is old and weak. It is exhausted and refuses to get' '.up. I am afraid of being left behind, while the caravan is moving with such speed

'?Do you have a rod'

'.Yes, here it is'

The Holy Prophet (s) used the rod to help the camel stand. He (s) then made it sit down again. He (s) then told Jaber to seat himself on its back. Holding the bridle in his hand he (s) made the camel rise. After that the camel moved slowly but steadily. On the way, The Holy Prophet (s) conversed affectionately with him, begging forgiveness .from Allah, for him, ۳۵ times, Jaber counted

'?How many brothers and sisters do you have'

'.I have seven sisters and am the only son'

'?Have you paid off your father's debts'

'.Not all. Some is still due'

Talk to the debtors on your return to Medina, and come to me during'

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'.the date-picking season

'.I will'

'?Are you married'

’.Yes‘

’?Who did you marry‘

’.I married a widow of Medina‘

’.A young virgin would have been more suitable for one as young as you‘

I have young, naive sisters. I thought a sensible, experienced woman would be more‘ ’.beneficial to the family than another naïve young girl

’?That was a very wise decision. How much did you pay for this camel‘

’.Five gold coins‘

’.I have the exact amount. Come and take its price from me in Medina‘

The journey ended and everyone got busy in the day’s work. After some days they .(returned to Medina. Jaber brought his camel to hand it over to the Holy Prophet (s

On seeing him The Holy Prophet (s) called out to Bilal and said, ‘Give him ۵ gold coins for the camel and ۳ gold coins to pay his father Abdullah’s debts. Return the camel to ’.him for his use

’?Turning to Jaber, he (s) asked, ‘Have you spoken to your father’s debtors

’.Not yet‘

’?Are the things left behind by your father not sufficient to pay off his debts‘

’.No, I’m afraid not‘

’.Remind me during the date-picking season‘

The season soon arrived. The Holy Prophet (s) went with Jaber, paid off his father’s .debt, and gave him some extra money to fullfill his domestic responsibilities

Decide Wages before Hiring

One day, Imam Reza (‘a) went with his friend Suleman ibn e Jafar for some work out of town. They returned at sunset and the Imam invited Suleman to stop over for the night. He accepted. As soon as they entered the exterior of

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the house, the Imam (‘a) saw all his serving men busy in the garden, planting, weeding, mowing and watering the flower- beds. The Imam (‘a) noticed a stranger .working besides them

’?He called one of his workers and asked, ‘Who is that person

’.The man replied, ‘He is a person we hired for the day to finish all the work quickly

’?Good. What wages did you hire him on‘

’.We thought of paying him his due after the work was done‘

The Imam (‘a) suddenly looked very annoyed. Displeasure was written all over his .face

Sulaiman felt he would severely punish his men. He came closer and asked,’ What is it ’?that has made you so depressed and angry

Sulaiman, I have told these people time and again, to hire a person only after‘ deciding the day’s wages. It is unwise to hire a person without knowing what he would wish to earn at the end of the day’s work. If the wages are decided, one can pay him a little more if he has worked well. That will please him and he will leave your place happy and grateful, and always be willing to work for you in future. You will both be pleased with each other. Even if paid what was decided at the beginning, he will be satisfied. However, if the wages are not mutually agreed upon, no matter what you give him, he will not be grateful at all, in fact, he is bound to feel he deserved more than he

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’.received

Services Offered to Tyrants

Haroon ur Rashid, the Abbasid ruler, was informed that Safwan Jamal had sold all his camels. The news upset him because he was preparing to go for Hajj and had hired many camels to carry the womenfolk and supplies. Safwan had also signed a contract to supply him with a certain number of camels. Haroon felt there was some special reason for this uncommon behaviour, because Safwan had offered this service to him .for many years, and not once had he failed him

He sent for Safwan, and when he arrived, asked him, ‘Is it true that you have sold all ?your camels

’.Yes, O Leader of believers‘

’?Why‘

I’m aging and find the job difficult. The children are also not interested in continuing‘ ’.the business. I realized the best solution lay in selling the beasts of burden

’.Tell me the true reason behind your action‘

’.I just told you‘

I think I know who has prompted this action of yours. Musa al Kazim, on learning‘ about our contract, has forbidden you to offer your services to me and sell your animals. This is the real reason behind your sudden decision.’ His voice reflected his rage and he said, ‘Had there been no previous relationship between us, I would have ’.separated your head from your body this instant

Haroon was right. He considered Safwan to be one of his close friends and allies and enjoyed a very pleasant relationship with him. But Safwan was a true believer and ,sincere follower of the Ahl al Bayt (‘a). One day

.(after signing the contract with Haroon, he came to visit Imam Musa e Kazim (‘a

The Imam (‘a) said, ‘Safwan, with the exception of one action all your deeds are ’.good

’?Safwan eagerly asked, ‘Ya ibne Rasool Allah, and what is that one act

’.You giving your camels on hire to Haroon‘

Ya ibne Rasool Allah, I’m not giving him my animals for a forbidden act. He is hiring‘ them to perform Hajj. I shall not even accompany him on the journey, but send some ’.of my employees with my servants

Answer me, Safwan, you have given him your camels on hire. He will use them and‘ you will receive money for them. You will hope that he remains alive to pay you the ’?money promised in the contract. Am I right

’.Yes, of course‘

Whoever wishes for the continuance of a tyrant will be party to his tyrannical actions,‘ ’.and whoever is included in the group of tyrants will go to hell

Safwan did not waste a single moment in deciding to sell his camels and escape being included in Haroon’s group. He sold his camels to free himself of the contract even if it meant losing his life. Being a true believer, taking this decision was easier than .displeasing Almighty Allah

Money Well Spent

The Holy Prophet (s) gave Imam Ali (‘a) ۱۲ dirhams to purchase a long shirt for him. .(Imam Ali (‘a) bought a shirt and gave it to him (s

’?The Holy Prophet (s) asked, ‘How much did it cost

’.Twelve dirhams‘

I am afraid I wouldn’t like to wear‘

something so expensive. If the shopkeeper agrees could you return it and buy ’?something cheaper

’.I’ll see, Ya Rasool Allah‘

Imam Ali (‘a) spoke to the shopkeeper and he agreed to return the money and keep .the shirt

Then both (s) went towards the market together. On the way, they saw a young slave-girl sitting in a corner of the street and crying. The Holy Prophet (s) went to her ’?and asked affectionately, ‘Why are you crying

My master gave me four dirhams to fetch goods from the market. I have lost them‘ ’.and can’t find them. I don’t have the courage to go home

The Holy Prophet (s) gave her four dirhams and told her to buy the needful and go .home

He then went to a shop and bought a shirt for four dirhams, and wore it. On the way home, a man, totally nude, was seen. Quickly, the Holy Prophet (s) took off his shirt and made him wear it. He (s) then went back to the shop and bought himself another shirt for four dirhams. On the way back, he found the slave-girl sitting with all the .goods and nervously looking around

’?The Holy Prophet (s) asked, ‘Why have you not gone home

I am afraid to go home because my master will ask me why I took so long and might‘ ’.beat me

’.Give me your address. I shall accompany you so that no one says anything to you‘

They reached the place and the girl stopped, pointing to the house where she

.lived

The Holy Prophet (s) went close to the door and said loudly, ‘ Assalam o Alaikum, ’.dwellers of this home

There was no answer. He (s) repeated the greeting again but was met with silence. The third time, the inmates all replied in unison, ‘Assalam o alaikum wa rahmatullah e ’.wa barakatahu, Ya Rasool Allah

?Why did you not respond the first time? Did you not hear my voice the first two times‘

’.We heard and recognized your voice the very first time‘

’?Then why did you not respond‘

Your greetings bring blessings with them, Ya Rasool Allah. We wanted to gain as ‘ ’.many as we could

’.I have come to ask you to excuse your slave-girl for being late, and not punish her‘

’.Your coming is such a blessing for us that I release her from bondage this instant‘

The Holy Prophet (s) looked at Imam Ali (‘a) and smiled, ‘Alhamdolillah! These ١٢ ’.dirhams were so blessed, that they clothed two bodies and freed one slave-girl

Credibility ensures Success

Abdur Rahman ibn e Sayaba Kufi was a young man who had recently lost his father. Besides his father’s death, his family was also a victim of poverty and unemployment. In short, he was miserably unhappy. One day, while he sat distraught, somebody .knocked at the door. It happened to be his father’s friend

’?After offering his condolence he asked, ‘Did your father leave some money behind

’.No‘

Here are ١٠٠٠ dirhams. Invest them in a business; consider them as your principal‘

amount. Use only the profit on domestic needs.' Handing him the

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.money, he bade farewell and left

Abdur Rahman was very obliged and relieved. He took the money and related the entire incident to his mother. Following his patron's advice, he converted the money into stock and began to trade his goods by placing them in a shop in the marketplace. In a short period, his business brought great profit. He spent the profit with great care and increased his merchandise. He met with greater success and the profit money increased, so much so that he decided that Hajj was now obligatory upon him. He spoke to his mother about his decision. She advised him to return the ۱۰۰۰ dirhams, .that had brought so much prosperity, to their generous donor

He went to the gracious friend and after greeting him, placed the pouch of money '.before him saying, 'I came to return your money

The friend thought the money was being returned because it was not sufficient. He '.said, 'If the money was insufficient I'll increase the amount

They were truly blessed. I wanted to thank you for your help and return your amount' to you. With this money I have expanded my business and earned so much profit that '.I am now able to return your amount and perform Hajj

Abdur Rahman returned home and starting making preparations for Hajj. After performing Hajj, he went to Medina and accompanied the large group of people going to pay their respects to Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a). He sat down quietly in a corner and watched

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people interact with the Imam ('a), present questions and receive answers. After the crowd decreased, the Imam ('a) signaled to him to come near. When he was close '?enough, the Imam ('a) asked, 'Is there something you need

Abdur Rahman introduced himself. The Imam knew his father and asked about his welfare. On learning of his demise he said, ‘Sad, very sad! May he receive Allah’s ’.blessings

’?After that he enquired, ‘Did you inherit money from your father

’.No. There was nothing at all‘

’?How have you performed Hajj, then‘

A friend of my father gave me ١٠٠٠ dirhams to invest in some business, which I did.‘ ’..Thanks to Allah, I made great profit and

The Imam (‘a) interrupted him and asked, ‘What did you do about the ١٠٠٠ dirhams ’?that you received from a friend

My mother advised me to return the money before performing Hajj. I went to return‘ ’.the money to him myself

’?Well done! Would you wish me to counsel you here‘

’.It will be my good fortune if you do‘

Remember, honesty and integrity is obligatory upon you. A man’s credibility makes‘ .him a shareholder of others’ wealth

Mine or Ours

The price of grain and bread was rising gradually in Medina. Everyone was busy trying to gather a whole year’s stock of grain, and he who had it was preserving it. Among .the population were the poor, who earned their daily bread

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) enquired from M’utab, his incharge of essential items, ‘Do we ’?have grain in the house

,Yes, enough to last a few months‘

’.Ya ibn e Rasool Allah

’.Take it to the market and sell it to the people‘

Ya ibn e Rasool Allah, there is a lack of grain in Medina, if we sell all our grain we will‘ ’.face difficulty in purchasing more

M’utab did as ordered and, after selling all the grain, came and reported to the Imam .((‘a

He (‘a) instructed him, thus: ‘From today onwards, our bread will be bought daily from the baking oven. There should be no difference between my bread and the bread available to others. It must contain ٥٠٪ grain and ٥٠٪ barley. Thanks to Allah, I can afford to eat whole grain bread for a whole year, but I will not do anything that makes ’.me answerable for being insensitive to the collective needs of the population

Advice

Look before You Leap

A Muslim once insisted upon receiving a special piece of advice from the Holy Prophet ’?(s). He (s) replied, ‘Do you pledge to act upon it if I do

’.Certainly! Ya Rasool Allah‘

’?Are you sure you will act on it‘

’.Absolutely! Messenger of God‘

’?Do you promise to act on it‘

’.I promise, Ya Rasool Allah‘

After repeating the question three times intentionally to make him realise the :significance of the advice, the Holy Prophet (s) said

Seriously evaluate the results of your action before performing it. If its end is good,‘ ’.perform it; if it can lead to deviation and ruin, abstain from it

Self Esteem

Mufazzal bin Qais ran into financial problems, debts and consequent stress. He came to Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) and shared

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his deplorable circumstances with him. ‘I am in great debt and can not figure out how to raise money to cover the daily expenses of my family. I cannot help myself in any way and have asked almost everyone for a loan, but now, when people see me .coming they close their doors in my face.’ His condition was pathetic

Please pray that I find some means of earning a living,’ he said. ‘I came to request‘ ’.you to pray to Almighty Allah to put an end to my misfortunes and difficulties

The Imam (‘a) called a maidservant and asked her to bring the pouch containing money sent by Mansoor. The maidservant complied with his wishes and brought the .pouch

The Imam (‘a) gave it to Mufazzal and said, ‘Take this. It contains ۴۰۰ dinars. They will ’.support you for some days

Mufazzal, embarrassed but grateful, said, ‘I did not mean to ask you for money. I only ’.came to ask you to pray for me

The Imam (‘a) said, ‘I will pray for you. However, I’d like to add a word of advice. Never advertise your difficulties and problems. This will inform people that you are a failure, an unsuccessful person. They will treat you with such contempt that it will ’.destroy your self esteem and ruin your personality

Astrology

Imam Ali (‘a) was leading his army towards the battle field of Nehrwan, when a

companion stopped him. He pointed towards the stranger accompanying him, and said, ‘Ya Ameer ul Momineen! This man is

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’.an astrologer and wishes to say something to you

The astrologer opined, ‘Ya Ameer ul Momineen! Do not proceed at this hour towards the battlefield, because the stars foretell that whoever travels at this hour will meet with failure and great loss. However, if you travel at the auspicious moment you will ’.meet with splendid victory

Imam Ali (‘a) looked at him and asked, ‘Can you foretell at what time good will befall ’?you and at what time evil

’.Yes I can‘

You lie. Even the Holy Prophet (s) did not claim to know the hidden realities. How can‘ ’.you? A person who has faith in your knowledge does not need God

He then addressed his army thus: ‘Beware of the trying to foretell the future or that which is concealed from you. This art is like witchcraft; witchcraft is like idolatry; idol worship will be punished with hell.’ He then raised his head and looked at the heavens above, offered a prayer of total reliance on Allah and, looking at the astrologer, said, ‘I ’.will intentionally defy your prophecy and proceed at once

The battle of Nehrwan was won with great ease and success, as compared to the .other battles fought in the way of Allah

An Astrologer’s Plight

Abdul Maalik ibn e ‘Ain, the brother of Zarara ibn e ‘Ain, believed in the influence of stars on man’s life. Despite the confirmed tradition against it, he collected many books on astrology and was firmly rooted in the subject. He consulted the books whenever he intended to

do anything or faced taking a decision. He believed that the stars controlled his .destiny and all success or failure depended on their position in the skies

Gradually, he became addicted to following the prophecy adduced from his calculations, so much so, that he lost his power of decision altogether. He became so superstitious that he dared not do anything without taking guidance from the stars .and their positions

Soon, he realized that astrology had made him worthless and increased his superstitiousness manifold. He felt that if he continued to consider days and moments as good and bad, lucky and unlucky, his whole life would become chaotic. On the other hand, he did not have the willpower to deny and defy their influence. He envied those people who courageously took decisions in their daily life and left the consequences to .the Almighty, having full faith in His Justice and Mercy

One day, he went to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (‘a) and relating his predicament, said, ‘I feel ’.that astrology has chained my hands and feet. I just cannot give it up

The Imam (‘a) looked at him shocked, ‘You mean to say you believe in all this and act ’?accordingly

’.Yes, Ya ibn e Rasool Allah‘

’.I hereby command you to go home and burn all those books at once‘

The Imam’s (‘a) disgust for his act had a strange effect on him. He immediately felt stronger, went home and torched all the books. After doing that, he sat down, relieved .and released

The Greater Duty

An Ansar of Medina

came to the Holy Prophet (s) looking perturbed. He voiced his bewilderment thus: 'Ya Rasool Allah (s), if there is a funeral ready for burial and a lecture is being delivered on teaching a useful skill simultaneously, and I can attend only one, which of the two has a greater right on my attendance?'

'If there are people to bury the dead, you must attend the lecture that increases your knowledge, because the reward of one such lecture is better than attending ۱۰۰۰ funerals, visiting ۱۰۰۰ patients, ۱۰۰۰ nights of prayer, ۱۰۰۰ days of fasting, ۱۰۰۰ dirhams given in charity, ۱۰۰۰ non-obligatory Hajj, and ۱۰۰۰ non-obligatory jihad.

There is a world of difference between all the above and one session spent in a scholar's company. Do you not know that only knowledge leads you to worship God, and only knowledge teaches you how to worship God? The good of this world and the next is aligned with knowledge, just as the evil in this world and the next is aligned with ignorance.'

Only Allah Knows

Usman ibn e Maz'oon was an immigrant, Muhajir, from Mecca. He was living in the house of a Medinite, Ansar. He was treated hospitably as a member of the family, as that was the basic principle of the fraternal relations created by the Holy Prophet (s) on immigration.

He fell ill. Umme 'Ala Ansari, the woman of the house, was a pious Muslim. She nursed Usman with care, but his condition worsened and he died.

When the funeral was ready, the Holy

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Prophet (s) arrived and Umme 'Ala pointed towards Usman's funeral and said, 'O Usman, may Allah's blessings descend upon you. I testify that Allah has granted you entrance into the realm of His blessings.'

When the Holy Prophet (s) heard the statement, he asked her, 'How did you know that

’?he had entered the realm of Allah’s blessings

’.I just said it. Obviously, I don’t know‘

Usman ibn e Maz’oon has entered that realm where all veils are lifted from ones‘ eyes. I also wish him well, but I’d like to add, that even though I am a Prophet, I never ’.express such an opinion about myself or anyone of you

Umme ‘Ala never again passed such remarks on anyone’s funeral. She always said, .‘Only Allah knows,’ when asked for her opinion

Some time after Usman’s death she dreamt that a stream was flowing for him. She ’.related the dream to the Holy Prophet (s) who said, ‘His actions flow like a stream

The Nightmare

The man woke up with a start. He was terrified by the nightmare. Various horrible interpretations increased his terror. He got up in the morning and went to see Imam .Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) for a clearer understanding of the dream

I have had a nightmare,’ he said. I dreamt of a man made of wood riding a wooden‘ horse, with a sword in his hand, which he waved with great might. The dream is ’.driving me crazy. Kindly interpret it, so that I can get some peace of mind

You are envious of the wealth‘

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of some person and keep thinking of ways and means to get your hands on it by hook .or by crook. Fear God and give up your bad intentions.’ The Imam (‘a) warned him

The man was shocked by the truth of the interpretation. ‘You are surely one who knows. There is no doubt that you have been granted knowledge by the City of knowledge. I must admit that I have been nurturing such a desire in my heart for some time now. My neighbor owns a huge estate. He is in dire need of money and wishes to sell his lands. Presently, he doesn’t have any offer besides mine. I was

’.envisaging buying his valuable assets for much less than they are worth

Mistaken Boost of Ego

Ahmad ibn e Muhammad ibn e Abi Nasr Bizanti was one of the eminent religious scholars of his time. He engaged in discussion through correspondence with Imam Reza (‘a) and received such logically acceptable answers to all his questions that he .was convinced of his leadership and Imamate

One day, he requested the Imam (‘a) in writing, ‘No traveling restrictions have been placed on me by the government. I sincerely wish to come and visit you and further ’.benefit from your knowledge

Some days later, the Imam (‘a) sent his personal carriage and invited him over as his guest. Their academic discussion continued until late at night. Bizanti questioned and the Imam (‘a) responded as expected. Bizanti felt elated by the thought that he had been invited as

a personal guest by the Imam (‘a) and was blessed with a one-to-one highly .enlightening conversation with him

Soon it was time to sleep. The Imam (‘a) ordered his serving man to settle Bizanti on .his personal bed

Such affectionate treatment had a strange effect on Bizanti. He thought, ‘There is no one more blessed than me today in the whole world. The Imam (‘a) sent his personal carriage for me, has given me sole attention and answered my questions for hours, and now when its time to rest, has offered me his own bed. Who can be more blessed ’?than me in this world

Lost in his thoughts, Bizanti was shocked into reality when he heard the Imam (‘a) call him by his own name. ‘Ahmed! Don’t mistakenly consider yourself better or more blessed than other Muslims because of my courteous treatment. My grandfather,

.Imam Ali (‘a) once went to visit his close friend Sasaa ibn e Suhaan when he was ill

He sat by his bedside and calmed him by placing his hand on his head and patting it for some time. However, before departing, he addressed his friend and said, ‘Don’t imagine yourself to be better than others because of this, because it does not signify your nobility or status. I have only performed what was my duty. My courteous ’.behavior should not make any individual mistakenly take pride in it

Saving a soul

It was during the Abbasid ruler, Mansoor, that the Muslims were granted their rights from the Bait ul

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Maal or State Treasury. The doors were opened and the needy were taking their share and moving off. One Muslim, named Suqrani, stood for a long time but could not get his share. One of his ancestors had been freed from slavery by the Holy Prophet (s) himself, and came to be known as the ‘One liberated by the Prophet(s)’. Suqrani took great pride in his ancestry and associated himself with the Household of the Holy .(Prophet (s

He looked around to see if he recognized somebody who could help him get his share. Suddenly, he saw Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a). He hurried towards him and explained his .reason for being there. The Imam (‘a) solved his problem

Before leaving, he (‘a) addressed him, saying, ‘A good deed is a good deed, no matter who performs it. Since you associate yourself with the Household of the Holy Prophet (s), a good deed will further cement that association. A bad deed is a bad deed, no matter who performs it. Since you associate yourself with the Household of The Holy ’.Prophet (s), your bad deed will be magnified and look worse

Suqrani stopped, dumbfounded. He was certain that the Imam (‘a) had referred to his bad habit of drinking alcohol. Despite knowing about it, he (‘a) had not refused helping him, but done him a favour, and then affectionately jolted his conscience and saved

.him from a bad prohibited act

For You and Me

On the ۲۰th of Ramadan ۴۰ AH, Imam Ali (‘a) dictated this document to

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.(his son, Imam Hasan (‘a

In the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most MercifulIn the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most MercifulIn the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful

Ali ibn e Talib, on his deathbed, declares the following as his will:Ali ibn e Talib, on his deathbed, declares the following as his will:Ali ibn e Talib, on his deathbed, declares :the following as his will

Ali testifies to the Oneness of Allah Almighty (SWT) and declares that Muhammad (S) is His Prophet. Allah (SWT) sent him on earth to make His faith supersede all other faiths and beliefs prevalent on earth. Certainly, my worship and devotion, my life and death, are from Allah, and for Allah alone. There is no god but Allah, and He has no partner. This is my faith and belief and I am among those who submit to His Will.Ali testifies to the Oneness of Allah Almighty (SWT) and declares that Muhammad (S) is His Prophet. Allah (SWT) sent him on earth to make His faith supersede all other faiths and beliefs prevalent on earth. Certainly, my worship and devotion, my life and death, are from Allah, and for Allah alone. There is no god but Allah, and He has no partner. This is my faith and belief and I am among those who submit to His Will.Ali testifies to the Oneness of Allah Almighty (SWT) and declares that Muhammad (S) is His Prophet. Allah (SWT) sent him on earth

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to make His faith supersede all other faiths and beliefs prevalent on earth. Certainly, my worship and devotion, my life and death, are from Allah, and for Allah alone. There

is no god but Allah, and He has no partner. This is my faith and belief and I am among .those who submit to His Will

Hasan, I bequeath unto you, all my sons, and members of my family, the following :deeds

Never give up piety and fear of God, and try hard to remain steadfast in the faith of (۱ Allah, until your very last breath.Never give up piety and fear of God, and try hard to remain steadfast in the faith of Allah, until your very last breath.Never give up piety and fear of God, and try hard to remain steadfast in the faith of Allah, until your very .last breath

Firmly grasp the cord of Allah. Remain united with amity, and avoid discord. The (۲ Holy Prophet (s) said, “Unity among people on the basis of peace, accord, and harmony is better than constantly praying and fasting. Discord and unrest destroy faith.” said, “Unity among people on the basis of peace, accord, and harmony is better than constantly praying and fasting. Discord and unrest destroy faith.” said, “Unity among people on the basis of peace, accord, and harmony is better than constantly ”.praying and fasting. Discord and unrest destroy faith

Do not neglect your women and relatives. Be sympathetic towards them, because (۳ sympathy will help man

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account for his deeds on the Day of Judgment.Do not neglect your women and relatives. Be sympathetic towards them, because sympathy will help man account for his deeds on the Day of Judgment.Do not neglect your women and relatives. Be sympathetic towards them, because sympathy will help man account for his deeds on .the Day of Judgment

Beware! Beware! Do not ever be neglectful of orphans. I warn you again, never (۴ .leave an orphan hungry and unprotected

For the sake of Allah, be mindful of your neighbors and fulfill your duties towards (۵

them. The Holy Prophet (s) emphasized the rights of neighbors so emphatically that we felt he wished to include them in our inheritance. emphasized the rights of neighbors so emphatically that we felt he wished to include them in our inheritance. emphasized the rights of neighbors so emphatically that we felt he wished to include them in our inheritance.

6) Remember! Remember! Attend to your obligatory prayers with concentration, because Prayer is a pillar of faith.

7) Remember! Remember! Carefully obey the commands revealed in the Holy Quran. Do not let others supersede you in obeying them.Remember! Remember! Carefully obey the commands revealed in the Holy Quran. Do not let others supersede you in obeying them.Remember! Remember! Carefully obey the commands revealed in the Holy Quran. Do not let others supersede you in obeying them.

8) Remember! Remember! Maintain the K'aaba as your focus of attention. Ensure the performance of Hajj. Let it not

lose its importance, for if you do, other people will wipe you out without giving you a moment's respite.Remember! Remember! Maintain the K'aaba as your focus of attention. Ensure the performance of Hajj. Let it not lose its importance, for if you do, other people will wipe you out without giving you a moment's respite.Remember! Remember! Maintain the K'aaba as your focus of attention. Ensure the performance of Hajj. Let it not lose its importance, for if you do, other people will wipe you out without giving you a moment's respite.

9) Do not ever consider your life and property more valuable than fighting in the way of Allah (SWT).Do not ever consider your life and property more valuable than fighting in the way of Allah (SWT).Do not ever consider your life and property more valuable than fighting in the way of Allah (SWT).

10) Remember! Remember! Do not neglect paying the poor tax (zak'aat), for it saves

the giver from the wrath of God.), for it saves the giver from the wrath of God.), for it .saves the giver from the wrath of God

Never neglect the household of the Holy Prophet (s). Protect them from becoming (۱۱ .victims of injustice and oppression

Be attentive towards the companions and friends of the Holy Prophet (s). He (۱۲ himself (s) has requested courteous and affectionate behavior towards them. has requested courteous and affectionate behavior towards them. has requested .courteous and affectionate behavior towards them

Beware of indifference towards (۱۳

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the poor and needy. Make them a constant part of your lives.Beware of indifference towards the poor and needy. Make them a constant part of your lives.Beware of .indifference towards the poor and needy. Make them a constant part of your lives

Never be careless regarding slaves. The Holy Prophet's (s) last request was for (۱۴ .them. last request was for them. last request was for them

Strive to perform an act that pleases Allah (SWT), without bothering about public (۱۵ opinion.Strive to perform an act that pleases Allah (SWT), without bothering about public opinion.Strive to perform an act that pleases Allah (SWT), without bothering .about public opinion

Urging the lawful and obligatory, and preventing forbidden acts must be your (۱۶ habitual routine. If you give this up, bad intentioned and unjust rulers will instate themselves over you and oppress you severely. Then all the prayers of the pious will prove to be useless.Urging the lawful and obligatory, and preventing forbidden acts must be your habitual routine. If you give this up, bad intentioned and unjust rulers will instate themselves over you and oppress you severely. Then all the prayers of the pious will prove to be useless.Urging the lawful and obligatory, and preventing forbidden acts must be your habitual routine. If you give this up, bad intentioned and

unjust rulers will instate themselves over you and oppress you severely. Then all the .prayers of the pious will prove to be useless

Always be courteous towards others, for the (۱۷

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Holy Quran has made it obligatory upon you.Always be courteous towards others, for the Holy Quran has made it obligatory upon you.Always be courteous towards others, .for the Holy Quran has made it obligatory upon you

It is your responsibility to encourage and maintain friendly relations between (۱۸ yourselves. Be good to each other. Avoid creating differences, or isolating, separating, .alienating, and distancing yourself from each other

Unite in the performance of good deeds. Do not involve yourself in deeds that are (۱۹ sinful, and cause unpleasantness and hatred leading to enmity.Unite in the performance of good deeds. Do not involve yourself in deeds that are sinful, and cause unpleasantness and hatred leading to enmity.Unite in the performance of good deeds. Do not involve yourself in deeds that are sinful, and cause unpleasantness and .hatred leading to enmity

Remember, God's punishment is severe, so fear it.Remember, God's punishment (۲۰ .is severe, so fear it.Remember, God's punishment is severe, so fear it

May God keep you safe in His protection, and grant the Holy Prophet's (s) followers the capacity and will to protect your honour and that of their Holy Prophet (s). I give you all in the protection of Almighty Allah (SWT). Peace be upon you all.. I give you all in the protection of Almighty Allah (SWT). Peace be upon you all.. I give you all in the .protection of Almighty Allah (SWT). Peace be upon you all

Faith Depends Upon Knowledge

An Expression of Faith

Hazrat Abu Talib ('a) took the Holy Prophet (s) under

his protection after his (s) grandfather died. He also happened to be the Chief of the .Elders of the Quraysh of Mecca

The Quraysh were constantly warning Abu Talib ('a) to control his nephew from spreading monotheism and deriding their gods, but he would silence them in his own courteous, but firm, manner. Islam went on spreading from household to household, from street to street, from tribe to tribe, but not without immense difficulties and obstacles placed in the path of the Muslims. The Holy Prophet (s) was never deterred by the threats he faced. However, he (s) suffered when he (s) saw the tortuous .suffering of the believers

As time passed, the Quraysh got unnerved with the growing influence of .Muhammad's (s) message, and called Abu Talib ('a) to another meeting of the Elders

They said, 'We have respected your word and taken no action against your nephew. Now things are getting out of hand. He calls our gods helpless pieces of stone and wood, thus humiliating them, us, and our ancestors. We will tolerate this no more. We have come to warn you for the last time. If you do not stop him, we will no longer respect your leadership of the Quraysh, nor you. We have come to declare open war '!against you and your nephew from this day onward. Stop him or face our wrath

The elders of the Quraysh had never before, spoken so harshly to Abu Talib ('a). He was aging and did not want to

.destroy the Hashimites by getting involved in a war with the Quraysh

He called the Holy Prophet (s) and shared the threats of the Quraysh with him. He suggested he (s) should cease his activities for a while, to quieten down the seething .Quraysh

The Holy Prophet (s) spoke quietly, but firmly, 'Dear Uncle! All I can say is that, if these

people place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, and then ask me to stop conveying the Message, I will refuse to do so. I will not stop delivering the word of God till it is known to all, even if I lose my life in the process.' The tears flowed down .his (s) cheeks as he spoke. He got up and walked towards the door

His uncle called him back and said, 'If this is how you feel, continue your work. By God, '.I will protect you till my very last breath

Pure Love

The summers had become unbearable because of the drought. No relief was visible. The people of Medina were found often staring at the sky, in the hope of spying some clouds, but were always disappointed. The scarcity of food and water was giving the .Medinites a hard time

To top it all, reliable sources informed the Holy Prophet (s) of an invasion by the Romans. The large Roman army was seen forging ahead towards Syria in the north eastern part of the Islamic state, and it was a power to be dealt with. The

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Holy Prophet (s) announced plans to meet them near Syria and told all the Muslims to .prepare for war. They would set out immediately

The Muslims, exhausted by the climatic conditions, agreed with no great zeal. The hypocrites made all kinds of excuses to be relieved of participation, hoping to enjoy the harvest season with its wealth of fruit and grain. However, no one was granted relief, and they all set out with their meagre supplies of food and water. There were fears that they would run out of supplies before reaching Syria, and that thought did .no good to those already unwilling to engage in war at that time

The thirty thousand Muslims trudged on in the merciless heat. On the way, some Muslims of weak faith started returning to Medina. Suddenly, some companions noticed Kaab ibn e Maalik turn his horse and trot homewards. They informed the Holy Prophet (s) of his departure. The Holy Prophet (s) wasn't upset. He just said, wasn't

,upset. He just said, wasn’t upset. He just said

Let him go. If there is an iota of good in him, God will send him back to you. If he‘ ’.doesn’t return, be convinced that God has saved you from his evil-intentions

’!A few minutes later they cried, ‘Kararah ibn e Rabei has also left us, Ya Rasool Allah

Let him go. If there is an iota of good in him, God will send him back to you. If he‘ doesn’t return, be convinced that God has

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’.saved you from his evil-intentions

’.A few minutes later, they cried, ‘Hilal ibn e Ummayya has also left

.The Holy Prophet (s) repeated the same words

Meanwhile, Abu Dharr’s camel suddenly stood still and refused to move. He desperately tried to urge it on, but to no avail. Not wishing to be left too far behind, he gathered his things and started on foot. On the way, the heat and the weight he was carrying drained him of all energy. He felt he could not go any further, but refused to give up. Suddenly, his foot struck against a rock. He looked and found a pool of fresh rain water. Looking up he saw some clouds moving away. He just tasted the water, and finding it palatable, filled his leather water bag with it. He was anxious to reach the rest of the army, so he walked faster, even though the weight on his back had increased considerably. However, faith was his guiding power and he did not lose .heart

The companions of the Prophet (s) made another announcement. ‘Abu Dharr cannot ’!be seen. He seems to have also left, Ya Rasool Allah

.The Holy Prophet (s) sighed, and repeated the same words once more

The path being rough and uneven, Abu Dharr’s mouth was absolutely parched, but he .saw the rear end of the army, and filled with joy, started running towards them

The people at the rear end saw somebody trying his best to reach them. They stopped and announced, ’One of them is

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’!coming back, Ya Rasool Allah

’.Dear Lord, let it be Abu Dharr‘

.It is Abu Dharr, it is Abu Dharr!’ they cried in unison‘

.(Forgive him, my Lord, he is unparalleled in truthfulness,’ prayed the Holy Prophet (s‘

Abu Dharr reached the Holy Prophet (s), who had covered part of the distance .between them, and collapsed at his (s) feet

.(Bring some water,’ ordered the Holy Prophet (s‘

.I have water with me, Ya Rasool Allah,’ gasped Abu Dharr‘

’?Why did you not drink it and quench your thirst, Abu Dharr‘

May my parents be accepted as ransom for you, Ya Rasool Allah. I struck a rock on‘ the way and found fresh water behind it. When I tasted it and found it good, I thought ’.of you, and vowed to drink it only after you had quenched your thirst with it

A Little Knowledge is a Dangerous Thing

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) heard of a person who everyone thought was very pious, honest, noble and God-fearing. In fact, he had earned a lot of fame because of his good deeds. The Imam (‘a) was keen to meet him, so he went to his place, and found a huge crowd of disciples sitting there. In a glance he realized they were all ignorant, .simple hearted folk

Suddenly, the pious man left the crowd and went outside. The Imam (‘a) followed him .to observe his greatness himself

The man stopped at a bread baking oven and picked up two loaves of bread and hid them under his cloak when the baker was not looking. The Imam

a) giving him the benefit of doubt, thought he must have prepaid for them or would') .pay him later, but then the reason for hiding them from the baker left him wondering

Still wondering, he saw the man stop at a fruit seller's shop and pick up two pomegranates, hide them under his cloak and walk on. The fruit seller remained .unaware, unpaid

The Imam ('a) was spellbound when he saw the man hand over the loaves of bread and the pomegranates to an ailing person. He went to the man and accosted him, 'Excuse me, I have been watching you for the past few minutes and found your .behavior extremely strange.' He explained why

'?The man looked at him boldly, and said, 'You are Jafar ibn e Muhammad, aren't you

'.Indeed, I am'

I admit that you are the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s) and as such, worthy of' '.respect, but I'm afraid you are not only ignorant but foolish as well

'?What makes you say that'

Your question itself is evidence of your ignorance and folly. You aren't even capable ' of understanding the simple mathematics of religion. Have you not read in the Holy ,Quran

Every good deed will be multiplied by ten, whereas, an evil deed will be counted as" one." Now listen. I stole two loaves of bread and two pomegranates. I committed four sins. On the other hand, I gave all four to an ailing person. Multiply four by ten and you get forty good deeds. I scored four sins and forty

good deeds. If I subtract the sins from the good deeds, I still score thirty six good deeds. It is as simple as that! Now tell me, was your question foolish or not?’

‘May Allah punish you with death! You are the one who is ignorant. You seem to have missed the Verse in the Holy Quran that says,

“Allah accepts the deeds of only those who fear God.”

This simple mathematics is enough to reveal your miscalculations. You have admitted four sins yourself. You then distributed the property of others, stolen by you, as charity and alms. Four more sins have been added to your account making them eight, and not one, single good deed.’ Saying this, the Imam (‘a) walked away, leaving the man, with a little knowledge, dumbfounded.

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) related this incident to his friends himself. He further clarified it, saying, ‘Personal interpretations and explanations, without sufficient knowledge and understanding, lead, not only you, in the wrong direction, but also continue misleading others.’

The Sound of Music

The sound of music and dance could be heard in the street. One could visualize the atmosphere within. Wine and women were satisfying the baser instincts of man.

A person, whose entire demeanour presented him as God-fearing, habituated to long late-night prostrations, passed by. A maid stepped out of the house to dispose the garbage in the corner of the street. The man stopped the maid and asked, ‘Is the owner of this house a free man or a slave?’

‘Free’, she replied.

‘He is

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certainly free! Had he been a slave, he would not have disobeyed his Master, the

’.Creator of the universe so boldly, and organized such a sinful gathering

This conversation delayed the maid, so, on her return, her master asked her, ‘What ’?took you so long

She related the entire conversation to her master. The words, ‘Had he been a slave he would have respected his Master’s wishes,’ resounded in his ears. He was filled with horror, and ran towards the door and into the street, not even stopping to put on .his shoes. He wanted to see the person who had said those words

Gasping, he reached him at the end of the street next to his. To his horror, he stood before Imam Musa al-Kazim (‘a). He wept bitterly, and apologizing for his sinfulness, .promised never again to indulge in such gatherings

Never again, did he put his foot into any slipper or shoe. He wanted to remain in that .(state of repentance forever, the state he stood in, that day, before the Imam (‘a

His name before this incident was Bashir ibn e Harris ibn e Abdur Rahman Maruzi. But after this incident he was given the title of ‘ Barefooted’, which later merged with his .name and became Bashir Barefooted

Never again, did he fall into the same sins and never did he break his pledge. Originally, he was considered one of the ‘rich and spoilt,’ but for the rest of his life he was seen as one of the ‘God-fearing

.’and pious

Wine

Mansoor, the Abbasid ruler, invited Imam Jafar e Sadiq (‘a) to Iraq more than often. He was afraid of a revolt initiated by the followers of the Household of the Holy Prophet (s), so he wanted to keep an eye on the Imam (‘a). Often, he would not allow .him to return to Medina for days on end

During one such visit, the commander in chief of the army held a banquet to celebrate the circumcision of his son. All the senior officials of the royal court were invited, .including Mansoor, the ruler. The Imam (‘a) was also invited

The tablecloth was laid and all the guests seated on both sides. Dinner was served. Everyone started eating. A guest asked for water. Instead of water, he was handed a .glass of wine. As soon as the Imam (‘a) saw the wine, he got up and left

,While he (‘a) was on his way out, he was urged to return, but he refused saying

The Holy Prophet (s) has said that a person who sits before a tablecloth where wine is‘ ’.being served will invoke the curse of Allah upon himself

Death, the Leveller

It was the reign of the Abbasid ruler, Mutawakkil. He was notorious for his tyrannical behavior and vicious habits. One night, he was enjoying the company of his confidantes with wine in plenty, when one of them mentioned the regard and respect the Muslims had for Imam Ali an Naqi al Hadi (‘a). The mere mention of his (‘a) name

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drew an angry look from the king. He was always being informed by people how the Muslims obeyed the Imam (‘a) and how there were chances of a rebellion being .planned in his house

Mutawakkil, intoxicated with power and wine, ordered his assassins to take some .guards and search the house and person of the Imam (‘a) immediately

The royal guards set off, well armed to carry out the search. They reached the house of the Imam (‘a). They found him on his prayer mat, spread on the hard stony floor, communicating with his Lord. However, they first searched him and then every nook and corner of his house. They found nothing at all. Disappointed, they insisted that the .king had summoned him to his court

They reached his palace and took him to the drinking parlour. Everyone was relaxing

with a glass of wine in hand. Mutawakkil ordered them to make the Imam ('a) sit next to him. The Imam ('a) sat down. Mutawakkil offered him a drink. He refused, saying he .had never touched it in his life

'.Let's hear some verses of poetry from you, then'

'.I am not a poet, but I do remember some verses of a poet, if you insist'

'.It doesn't matter whose verses they are, I want to be entertained, so go ahead'

:The Imam ('a) recited the following verses

,Their homes they built, walls high and strong

;Heavily armed guards to protect them along

But, all stood helpless before death, you know!But, all stood helpless before death, you know!But, all

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!stood helpless before death, you know

!And lost in their struggle to survive, you know

Dragged into graves from those castles were theyDragged into graves from those castles were theyDragged into graves from those castles were they

;Into narrow, dark depths where, unfortunate, they lay

Gone is your glory, your splendour, O where?''Gone is your glory, your splendour, O where?''Gone is your glory, your splendour, O where'?

'?Cried a voice, 'your throne, your crown, O where

Luxury and lust were certainly not newLuxury and lust were certainly not newLuxury and lust were certainly not new

;Thick parlour curtains always hid them from view

Defeated, despised, stinking corpses todayDefeated, despised, stinking corpses todayDefeated, despised, stinking corpses today

;In graves of dust, were they left to decay

,The dust they spat on, now above them lay

;Those faces of lust, just buried away

,Their bellies they filled with rich sumptuous food

;Now graves they filled, recording nothing good

,Gluttonous they remained for years on end

!Now for their deeds, in the grave, they fend

The effect of these verses was devastating. The intoxicated company lost its pleasurable feelings and started sweating with fear. Mutawakkil threw his glass on the floor and burst into tears. The Light of truth showed them their true selves, but for how long? Impurity within can be washed only by submitting to the truth, not silencing .it

The Islamic Way of Life

Last Advice

Imam Musa al-Kazim's ('a) mother and Imam Jafar al-Sadiq's ('a) wife, Umme Hameeda was sitting in her home, bereaved by the passing away of her beloved .husband and Imam

She noticed a very

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close friend of her husband, Abu Basir, among those who had come to condole with

the family of the Imam (‘a). They both wept silently. Umme Hameeda then addressed Abu Basir. “During the last moments of his life, the Imam (‘a) suddenly opened his eyes and insisted upon seeing all his relatives, friends and close associates as soon as possible. We were much concerned as the manner of demanding their presence was almost a command. All those who could, arrived immediately. On seeing them, the Imam said, ‘Our intercession will certainly not reach those who disregard prayer.’ ”.These were his last words of advice to all who loved him

The Greater Worship

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) one day noticed that a constant visitor had not attended his discourse for many days. He asked his friends if they had any knowledge about his .whereabouts

Ya ibne Rasool Allah, he is going through a great financial crisis and is on the verge of‘ ’.poverty

.What is he doing about it?’ the Imam (‘a) asked‘

’.Nothing, he is seen constantly praying in a corner of the house‘

’?How does he make both ends meet‘

’.One of his friends is providing for him and his family‘

’.By Allah, his friend’s act is far, far greater in worship than his‘

Solving Problems

Sufwan was present in the company of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) when a citizen of Mecca arrived, extremely distressed about something. He sat beside the Imam (‘a) and described his problem in detail. It was a financial problem gone awry due to mismanagement by

both parties. The Imam (‘a) immediately ordered Sufwan to go with the believer and

help him solve his problem. Sufwan did as he was asked, and solved the problem with .the wisdom and resources Allah had blessed him with

’?When he returned, the Imam asked him, ‘What happened

’.The Almighty solved the problem‘

The Imam said, ‘Remember, solving a minor problem that demands a little bit of your time is worth more in Allah’s sight than circumambulating the K’aaba seven times. Let me relate an incident from the life of my grandfather, Imam Hasan (‘a). One day a man came to him, seeking his aid in a problem. Imam Hasan (‘a) didn’t stop to think. He put his feet into his slippers and got up to accompany him. On the way they passed .by the mosque and saw Imam Husain (‘a) offering his prayers

.(How come you saw Husain ibn e Ali (‘a) and did not go to him?’ asked the Imam (‘a‘

.’I was informed that he was in a state of ‘a’iteka’f’, ‘worship in isolation‘

But if Husain (‘a) had got the opportunity of solving your problem, it would have been‘ .’”worth more than a whole month of “worship in isolation

The Strongest Act of Faith

:One day the Holy Prophet (s) asked all the Muslims present

’?According to Islam, which act of a believer denotes the strongest faith‘

.Prayer,’ said one. ‘No,’ was the answer‘

.Zakaat,’ said another. ‘No,’ was the answer‘

.Fasting,’ proffered a third. ‘No’ was the answer‘

.Hajj,’ volunteered a fourth. ‘No,’ was the answer‘

’,Jihad,’ said a fifth. ‘No‘

.was the answer

The Holy Prophet (s) then said, ‘All the things that you have mentioned are great and important essentials of faith, but not the answer to my question. The correct answer :is

Befriending for the pleasure of Allah and sundering relations for the approval of“ ”.Allah

Special Treatment

The rules of life instituted by Islam were gradually being erased by the continuous rule of the Umayyad and Abbasid kings who loved splendour and glory, and expected undue respect and special treatment from other human beings. The noble, fraternal and simple interactive lifestyle of the Holy Prophet (s) and his noble companions was a thing of the past, except for glimpses found in his noble Household (‘a). The most sorrowful part was that the people had become so used to the despotic attitude of the .kings that they had begun to accept it as the rightful conduct of rulers

One day, Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘a) wished to bathe in the public bath. He sent a .messenger to enquire when it would be convenient for the owner of the bath system

He replied with utmost respect, as he was accustomed to show all respectable citizens, ‘Should I forbid anyone else from entering the entire bath system while you ’?occupy one bathroom

.Certainly not!’ was the astonished reply‘

.Why not?’ asked the bewildered owner‘

Remember, the lifestyle of a believer is simple, accommodating, and free from‘ decorum. The true believer does not demand special treatment. He believes in ’.treating human beings as equals, not masters or slaves

Live in the World or Renounce it

After the Battle of

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Jamal, Imam Ali (‘a) entered the town of Basra. During his stay, he went to enquire after the health of a friend, Rabi ibn e Ziad Harisi, who was unwell. On reaching his house, he found it was no less than a palace. Commenting on its splendour, he said, ‘Of what use can such a palatial house be in this world, when you long for such a one in the hereafter. However, you can make this house a means of earning one in the .hereafter

For that you must be very hospitable towards guests and visitors; be courteous and affectionate towards people; make sure your duties towards your brethren- in-faith are fulfilled in this house; help people obtain their rights so that people come to equate this house with a place where truth and justice reign. In short, besides personal advantage, use this house for public benefit, too. Thus, you will be saved ’.from egoistic satisfaction

.Rabi listened intently. He then complained against his brother Asim

.(What is your complaint?’ asked Ameer-ul Momineen (‘a‘

He has renounced the world. He has donned rags and alienated himself from the‘ ’.world and all the people in it

’.Let me talk to him‘

When Asim came, Imam Ali (‘a) greeted him thus, ‘O enemy of thy own self! It seems Satan has depleted you of all common sense. How could you be insensitive towards the needs of your wife and children? Do you believe that Almighty Allah will be annoyed with you for enjoying the lawful pleasures and blessings

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He has bestowed on you in this life? You have become more insignificant in the eyes ’.of your Creator

O Ameer-ul-Momineen ('a), you are also like me. You also bear trials and difficulties' patiently, and live a life of extreme adversity. You never clothe yourself in soft expensive materials, nor eat delicious food. I am trying to emulate you and follow .your lifestyle,' explained Asim

Imam Ali ('a) explained, 'You are treading the wrong path, Asim. There is a difference between us. You are not in my position. I am the leader, ruler and guide of the .Ummah

The duties and responsibilities of rulers and leaders are very different from those of a common citizen. The common citizen does not have the same obligations as the ruler. The Creator of this universe has ordained it compulsory for just rulers to live their .lives with an eye on the poorest class of people in their states

According to His command, a just ruler should experience and observe the adverse conditions borne by the poverty-ridden class under his rule, so that the poor do not suffer from an inferiority complex, which makes them unhappy and affects their performance. Thus, my responsibilities being totally different from yours, there can '.be nothing common between your conduct and mine

Self-Negation versus Lawful Pleasures

Sufyan Suri belonged to a group of Muslims called Zahids and Sufis, which emerged in the beginning of ۲۰۰ AH. They rejected the world, considering its blessings and advantages as temptations to beguile human beings away from

.the worship of God. They advocated simplicity, bordering on the bare level of survival

One day he came to visit Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) and found him dressed in a graceful white robe of expensive material. He immediately criticized it, saying, 'You should not be dressed in such rich robes. They are not for you to adorn yourself. The pleasures and splendor of the world should not contaminate pious people like you. I mean, you '.should exercise restraint in terms of good food and splendid clothes

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ('a) smiled and said, 'I would like to explain something that will benefit you both in this life and the hereafter. Besides, if you wish to gain more knowledge about Islam so that you can communicate it to others, it will be most useful; but, if your purpose is to create disharmony among Muslims, you will disregard .whatever I say, as done by all mischief mongers. Listen carefully

You are clinging to the state of early Islam. Your mind carries the image of the simple lifestyle of the Holy Prophet (s) and his companions. You think that that lifestyle has become obligatory upon all Muslims until the Day of Judgment. Actually, it is otherwise. The Holy Prophet (s) and his faithful companions lived at a time when the .Muslims were surviving on the bare minimum

Accordingly, their lives were no different from the rest of the believers. However, whenever a nation becomes resourceful and attains the blessings created for mankind, then those closest

to Allah (SWT) deserve those blessings more than anyone else; the pious and God fearing more than the wicked and oppressive, the believers much more than the non .believers

You consider it sinful for me to enjoy Almighty Allah's blessings. Let me tell you something. Since I attained maturity, I have made sure the portion that Allah (SWT) has decided for the close of kin, the poor, the needy, the wayfarer, the captive, and whoever may have a right over me, reaches them before the sun sets. Not for a moment each day, have I disregarded or delayed performing my duties towards my '.fellowmen

Sufyan was nonplussed. He had no answer, so he got up and went to his companions, shared his conversation with the Imam ('a). They decided to prepare a strong argument against the Imam's ('a) case, with supporting evidence from the Holy .Quran and the Sunnah

After some days, the group visited the Imam (‘a) and said, ‘ Our friend could not present his case concerning a simple lifestyle convincingly, so we have come ’.prepared to defeat your argument with ours on the basis of undeniable evidence

You are most welcome to present your evidence-supported reasoning,’ the Imam‘ .(‘a) replied

.Our evidence is based on the Quran itself,’ they began confidently‘

Which evidence can outsmart the verses of the Holy Quran. Go ahead. I’m more than‘ .eager to hear,’ he replied

Two verses of the Quran will suffice to prove our case and belief system. Allah‘ Almighty has praised some of the

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:companions of the Holy Prophet (s) thus

Though poverty did not allow them to fulfill their own needs, they regarded the needs“ of others above their own and helped them. Those will indeed be successful who are ”.free of miserliness and niggardliness

and

”.Though hungry themselves, they fed the poor, the orphan and the captive“

.As soon as their group leader stopped talking, a person from the audience spoke up

As far as I understand, you people are yourself doubtful and unsure about your own‘ beliefs. You wish to kill all personal interest in ones property and belongings, so that people should distribute all they have among beggars like you, while you live off their hard-earned living. Besides, I have never seen you practice what you preach. You never resist taking good food yourself but want to prevent other Muslims from that ’.pleasure

The Imam (‘a) silenced his companions saying, ‘Such impulsive outbursts never ’.achieve anything

He then addressed the Sufis and asked, ‘You are quoting the Holy Quran, but do you know which verses have been abrogated and which revealed in their place; which are obvious and which obscure? Many people in the Ummah are being led astray because ’.of a lack of information about the Quran

’.We have to admit that we are informed to some extent, but definitely not enough‘

Your problem is, therefore, the same as that of the others who are going astray. You ‘ need to be equally aware of the Ahadith, before creating a set of beliefs that separate you

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from those who know them. Let us discuss the two verses that you quoted. In both, .(the Almighty is not declaring the enjoyment of His blessings as prohibited (haram

He is eulogizing humility, generosity, and sacrifice. He is praising those people who, at a certain time gave precedence to the needs of others over their own, and instead of using their lawful earnings themselves, offered them to others in need. They would not be sinning if they did not do so, because the Almighty had not commanded them to do so, nor stopped them from it. Thus, perfecting large-heartedness and generosity, they gave away what they needed and suffered difficulties themselves. .Their reward certainly lies with Allah Almighty

The verses you cited do not prove your case, because you condemn those people who use their own hard-earned money to enjoy the blessings of Allah (SWT), which .the Quran does not allow you to do

Those pious people demonstrated the height of generosity and charity, but soon Allah (SWT) revealed laws determining the extent of spending on others. The new laws became obligatory on all Muslims, abrogating the earlier demonstration of generosity. Allah (SWT) restricted believers from distributing their earnings among others without

satisfying the needs of their own family members, because the weak, the old, the .children in the family find it difficult to endure the hardships forced upon them

For e.g., I have a loaf of bread. I give it away. My family starves, whereas, providing them with food is

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obligatory upon me. Some might fall ill or even die. The Holy Prophet (s) clearly :enunciated the rules of charity, thus

If a person has some loaves of bread, dates, or money, which he wants to distribute, he must first share them with his parents, then his wife, children and himself, then relatives in descending order in the blood chain, and then, in fourth place, on others as .charity

Charity thus comes last of all. When the Holy Prophet (s) heard that a Medinite had distributed his entire fortune in charity before dying, leaving his own family penniless, so that they would have to beg to survive, he (s) was extremely annoyed. He said that .he would never have allowed him burial in the Muslim's graveyard had he known this

My father Imam Muhammad Baqir ('a) dictated to me the following words of the Holy Prophet (s): "Place your children first in the list of spending. Follow up with whoever is ".next in the blood chain

:The Holy Quran clearly states

The pious and God-fearing are those who are neither niggardly and miserly, nor over" ".generous and extravagant in charity, but always moderate and balanced

Wherever Allah (SWT) condemns miserliness, He also condemns extravagance in charitable causes. Moderation is the rule. It is unreasonable to distribute ones entire wealth in charity and then pray to God for sustenance. Remember, God does not accept the prayers of such people. The Holy Prophet (s) classified the persons whose :prayers are not accepted. They are

• Persons

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who wish their parents ill

• Persons who lend their money to another without any witness or written pledge/ testifying document, thus wilfully endangering their right

• Persons who pray for deliverance from their wives, foregoing their right to divorce, or being cowardly and not using that right

• Persons who sit idle at home and pray for sustenance, demonstrating greed and ignorance; being blessed with the capacity to move and be active by their Lord; given strong limbs and muscles, hands, feet, eyes, ears and reason, to see, hear, think, and devise methods to use these blessings in order to earn a living. The purpose of creating these organs was that man should work hard and use them to achieve everything needed to sustain life; to progress; and dutifully obey the Divine commands as a sign of gratitude; and not become a burden on others. If man struggles and tries as commanded, sustenance is bound to follow. If he tries and does not succeed, he will still have the satisfaction that he did as was expected of him. He will not feel guilty if he tries and is destined to lose.

• Persons granted abundant wealth waste it through abundant generosity, and then pray for more. Allah (SWT) responds to such persons by asking them:

• "Why did you not exercise moderation?"

• "Did I not command moderation in generosity?"

• "Did I not warn you from being extravagant in charity?"

• Persons praying for something that involves cruelty towards someone

Allah (SWT) has explained the

limits of generous and charitable spending, especially after an incident that took place .(in the life of the Holy Prophet (s

It so happened that the Holy Prophet (s) had some gold coins, which he wished to spend in charity. He did not want to hold on to them overnight. All day he kept distributing the coins until he had none left. Next morning, a needy person stood outside his door begging for charity, for alms, for help. He had nothing to offer the :poor man. Verse ۲۹ of Surah Asra' revealed the following

Do not shut your palm tight, nor open it so wide that nothing is left to give a seeker of" ".alms, leaving you embarrassed and regretful

The Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (s) support the ruling provided by the Quran. Those .who believe in the Quran also believe in the Ahadith

Hazrat Salman i Farsi and Hazrat Abu Dharr are two famous pious and God fearing .believers that you all have heard about. Their way of life was as described above

Hazrat Salman I Farsi used to set aside an amount that would cover his annual expenditure, in order to avoid any kind of inconvenience, as soon as he received his annual income from the Bait ul Maal. People questioned his act, saying, 'You are such a pious person, yet you provide for yourself for a whole year. Supposing you die within '?a week, what good will those provisions serve you

I may not die. Why do you suppose that I'

will die and not suppose that I might live for the whole year? If I survive the year, I will need the essentials of life. You do not realize that a person suffering from financial problems cannot worship or obey his Lord as peacefully and easily as one whose .needs have been taken care of,' was his wise answer

On the other hand, Abu Dharr had a few camels, and some heads of sheep. He

survived on the milk of the ewes and slaughtered a sheep to satisfy his own desire for meat, feed his guests, or fulfill the needs of some one. However, he always retained .his share while distributing the meat

Can you name any other person more pious than them? You have all read how the Holy Prophet (s) praised their levels of faith and piety. These people never neglected their own needs in the name of piety and obedience. Today, you people are preaching a lifestyle that disregards the needs of family, advises self-negation, detachment from the world, and distribution of all possessions in charity. No honorable companion .of the Holy Prophet (s) ever adopted this lifestyle

I seriously warn you with a tradition quoted by my father and ancestors about what :the Holy Prophet (s) said

A faithful believer (Momin) is an amalgamation of strange attributes. Whether his“ body is cut into pieces, or all the countries in the east and west become his dominion he will be the same; thankful and obedient to Almighty Allah, because, both

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conditions- adversity and abundant prosperity-are equally good and honorable for ”.him

Do you think adversity is an essential state for a Momin to demonstrate his goodness and nobility? You are mistaken. The worth of a Momin lies in his soul, his faith and belief. Be it adversity or prosperity, he is always fully aware of his responsibilities and duties, and he performs them to perfection. This is why external circumstances do not determine his nobility; his immaculate conduct and behavior in ease and comfort, trial .and tribulation, determine it

I would like to know whether my discourse until now has satisfied you or not. Do you ’?still need further exposition of this topic

.They did not know what to say

He felt they needed some more guidance, so he went on, ‘Let me explain it from another angle. In the early days of Islam, every Muslim had to fight ten non-believers. If he failed to do so, he was sinful, disobedient and guilty of neglecting his duty. When the number of Muslims increased, Almighty Allah mercifully changed the law, and one .Muslim had to fight only two non-believers

Another perspective would be the Islamic system of justice. I’d like to ask you what laws Islam has ordained to ensure justice for the oppressed and punishment for the ?criminal

Let us suppose there is a petition against one of you, in court, by your wife. It complains of neglect in providing the basic essentials of life. The judge orders you to provide your

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wife with her rightful demands. How will you respond to that sentence, and how will you pay for her expenses? Will you declare that you have detached yourself from ?monetarily beneficial worldly activities and spend your time in the worship of God

Will your excuse be valid and reasonable? Will the verdict of the judge be just and fair, or unjust and unfair? If you declare the verdict as unfair, you will be openly denying the truth, besides deceiving the entire Ummah with your hypocrisy. If you agree that the verdict is fair, your excuse will become invalid. This totally falsifies your system of .belief, proving it irrational, unreasonable, and impracticable

Let us now view the obligatory and non-obligatory expenditure, which, as a Muslim, one is bound to incur. For instance, sometimes the Zakat has to be paid, at other times penalties for some acts of disobedience. If the entire Ummah adopts your lifestyle of piety and self-negation, what will become of the essential financial system? Zakat is obligatory on gold, silver, sheep, camel, cow, and other domestic animals; dates, raisins and their fellow species. What will be the condition of the Zakat funds? Has not it been ordained compulsory to improve the lives of the poor and needy, and the ?owner to benefit from life’s blessings

The purpose of these laws is to motivate man to achieve as much as his potential allows him and enjoy the benefits of those blessings. If the purpose of religion was to negate

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the blessings of life and lead a life of imminent poverty, then the poor must have achieved the heights of perfection as purposed by the Creator. Thus, no one should extend financial help to them; they should be left on their own in the condition they are, so that they do not fall below that level of perfection. On the other hand, the poor should also refuse all assistance, because they do not want to lose those heights of .perfection

What you are suggesting is that whoever owns any property should give it all away, distribute it among others, thus invalidating Zakat, the divine law of distribution of .wealth

Let me warn you, you are treading an extremely dangerous and misguided path that is the result of ignorance, unfamiliarity with Quranic studies, and unawareness of the Sunnah and Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (s). Besides this, you refuse to accept the authenticity of those Ahadith, which do not support, propose or encourage, rather denounce your way of life, inspite of the fact that, the Holy Quran also supports the .recommendations in these Ahadith

You refuse to give up your self-created version of religion, which you have foolishly adopted; a misguided way of life, which has nothing to do with Islam. Besides, you force others to adopt it! You, sadly, cannot distinguish between the abrogated verses and ordained verses; the obvious and the obscure; the obligations and prohibitions, nor decipher the fine nuances and strange aspects hidden in them, yet proudly proclaim

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.a view of life based on the Quran

Let me question you about the prayer of Sulaiman ibn e Daud (‘a). It reads in the :Quran, thus

”.O my Creator! Grant me a kingdom, the like of which no other can attain“

God granted him such a kingdom. There is no doubt that a prophet cannot pray or ask for anything that is either not right or good. Neither the Quran, nor any believer, has ever declared this desire as impious, nor questioned the reason behind the desire for such a huge kingdom, unparalleled in splendor and glory. Similar is his father, Daud’s .(‘a) case

Similarly, before him, came Yusuf (‘a). Yusuf (‘a) officially demanded from the ruling king, ‘Make me Exchequer of the State Treasury, because I am both honest and trustworthy.’ Gradually, he became the Administrator of the entire kingdom, ranging from Egypt to Yemen. The famine had badly affected surrounding areas. Caravans of people would come to buy grains from them and return home. There is not one incident showing that Yusuf (‘a) ever did anything wrong. He performed his duties .with absolute honesty and integrity

The Quran also mentions the incident of Zulqarnain (‘a). He loved God and was loved by Him, therefore He provided him with all essential knowledge and power in the twinkling of an eye and made him ruler of all the countries in the east and west of the .earth

!Gentlemen

- Give up your dangerously misguided way of life and adopt the true principles of

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.Islam

- Accept whatever God has declared as do’s and dont’s, and stop coining your own .laws

- .Do not interfere in matters you do not understand

.Learn from those who know •

Persevere to gain knowledge of the abrogated verses and ordained verses, the • obvious and the obscure, the obligations and prohibitions. Not only will you find this .knowledge beneficial, it will free you from this folly and deviation

.Distance yourself from ignorance, because it espouses the majority •

Sadly, only a minority uses reason and seeks wisdom. Almighty Allah states in the :Quran

’”.Wisdom is much, much higher than any person considered wise“

(A Few Quotes of Imam Ali (‘a

Conduct

.People act like mirrors; friends reflect your good qualities and enemies your faults

Ten social virtues

Generosity, modesty, truthfulness, integrity, hospitality, decency, courage, tolerance, steadfastness and gratitude

Sincerity

A person is sincere if his words and deeds, exterior and interior are the same; he .fulfills his pledges and maintains purity in worship

.A favour is a trust that you must return

Courtesy

.Courtesy conceals genetic flaws

.Intelligence blossoms on courtesy

Unity

Truth unites, falsehood divides. Stay with the truthful, no matter how few; stay away .from the false, no matter how many

.Satan first creates discord in congregations, then divides and destroys

Speech

.Speech is the scale, which reason makes weighty, ignorance makes weightless

.A man reveals himself through his speech

The knowledge expressed only through speech is the meanest; that which is .demonstrated through every act of the body is sublime

Learning through experience

.He who learns a lesson from each experience will save himself from ruin

In the rise and fall of fortunes

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.are lessons to be learnt

Folly

:A man's folly is demonstrated through three acts

Talking about matters that don't concern him

Offering comments when not asked

Interfering in other people's affairs without understanding

.He, who thinks he is the wisest, is the most foolish

.A foolish man speaks without thinking; a wise man thinks before he speaks

Ignorance

:Ignorance reveals itself in the following

,Being angry without cause

,Speaking without need

,Rewarding the undeserving

,Not distinguishing between friend and foe

,Revealing a secret

.Trusting everyone

.The ignorant never realizes his mistake nor accepts advice

Lies

.No one ever believes a man who lies

Nobility

.Ensuring justice for the weak is a sign of nobility

Defect

The greatest of defects is to point out a defect in others, which you yourself possess .but fail to notice in yourself

He is the wisest who tries to mend his own defects rather than keep an eye on the .defects of others

Hypocrisy

:Hypocrites can be identified by the following characteristics

.They say peace but mean war

.Their nourishment is false allegations

.Their generosity is being dishonest

.They keep their distance due to arrogance

.They do not wish anybody well

.They sleep like a log at night and create furor during the day

They have no respect for the mosque, and present themselves in it at the end of the .prayer or worship

Revenge

.The best revenge is to improve yourself

It is easier to win your enemy over by sincere measures and good deeds than declare .war and dominate him after great bloodshed and destruction

.The best revenge is forgiveness

Miserliness

.A true believer (momin) is never miserly nor ill tempered

Envy

:Three things can only ruin

Arrogance- it brought damnation to Iblis

-Avarice

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it made Adam lose paradise

Envy- it made Qabeel commit the first murder, and that too of his own brother, Habeel

.Envy is to man what rust is to iron

Malice

.Malice is an incurable disease, which is also infectious

.He who breeds malice breeds unhappiness and lives in it till he dies

Disobedience

.The worst friend is one who glorifies the disobedience of God

.Try to postpone disobeying God, instead of hurrying to disobey

Death

He who desires the world is sought by death, and he who is prepared for it, the world .seeks to deliver his sustenance to him

.He who waits for death hurries to perform good deeds

Death for the virtuous is a reward for them, death for the vicious is a relief for the .people

Martyrdom is the best way to depart from this world. I swear by him in whose hand lies the soul of this son of Abu Talib ('a), I would prefer a thousand wounds of the .sword in the way of Allah, than disobey Him and die in bed

p: ۱۵۳

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It’s obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named “Ghaemiyeh Book Market” with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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Commerce and sale: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

Users' affairs: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

Introduction of the Center – Ghaemiyeh Digital Library